

Kozyrev pledges to help Israel-PLO talks

GAZA (R) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said on Saturday he would convey to Israeli leaders a request from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat to speed up the implementation of their peace accord. Standing next to Mr. Arafat after a meeting in Gaza, Mr. Kozyrev said: "We discussed the difficulties and how to promote the peace process and we will convey the message of peace and the implementation of the agreements to the Israeli counterparts when we meet them in Israel." Mr. Kozyrev was to meet his Israeli counterpart, Shimon Peres, on Saturday, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Sunday. He promised the Palestinians material assistance, which a Palestinian official said comprised 45 vehicles and several jeeps for the Palestinian police. Mr. Arafat complained that Israel's policy of sealing off the Gaza Strip after attacks by suicide bombers was incurring heavy economic losses for the Palestinians. He urged Mr. Kozyrev to press Israel to implement the next stage of the 1993 PLO-Israeli agreement — Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian parts of the West Bank, followed by Palestinian elections.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
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HCST announces launch of Crown Prince Award

AMMAN (Petra) — The Higher Council of Science and Technology (HCST) Saturday announced the launching of the Crown Prince Award marking the 30th anniversary proclaiming His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, as Crown Prince. HCST's announcement said the award was meant to support the scientific movement of individuals and institutions. The council allocated JD 15,000 to be distributed among the three winners. One of the awards will be given to a university or a college which contributed to the development of economic, social or cultural life in Jordan. Another will be granted to an institution which contributed to developing successful curricular or extracurricular activities that benefit the educational system. The third award will be granted to an institution or an individual showing prompt response to the requirements of the national development process and the higher education institutions. The HCST said it was granting these awards to stress Prince Hassan's keenness to support the scientific movement in the Kingdom.

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Regent urges
Cabinet
to prepare
team for
negotiations
with EU

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Saturday urged the Council of Ministers to continue its efforts to prepare an efficient Jordanian team to negotiate with the European Union (EU) over the Jordan-EU "partnership agreement" as of next July.

Chairing a regular Cabinet session after holding a meeting with the Prime Minister with Acting Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, Deputy Prime Minister and Information Minister Khaled Karaki and Minister of State for the Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzeddin, Prince Hassan voiced his pride in Jordan's key role in international humanitarian initiatives, including the proposal to have a new humanitarian order, and pride in the participation of the Jordanian Armed Forces in peace keeping operations in various parts of the world.

The Regent stressed the importance of discussing economic and cooperation issues, saying they serve human causes in the Middle East, particularly in the fields of human rights, democracy, political pluralism and socio-economic development.

Prince Hassan briefed the ministers on the outcome of His Majesty King Hussein's visits to France and the U.S. and the Crown Prince's visits to Germany and Austria.

He said 1995 should be the year for building self-confidence, noting that Jordan should shoulder its national and regional responsibilities and demonstrate its ability to take initiatives in order to maintain its participation in positive changes in political, economic and social fields.

The Crown Prince urged "everyone in Jordan to work in a team spirit to stand up to challenges of the stage in a responsible manner," stressing the need for having continuous and precise preparations for the Amman economic summit which will be held in October.

This summit, he told the Cabinet, will lend an opportunity to the countries of the region to interact together and with other regions of the world.

Earlier in the session, Mr. Rawabdeh outlined issues top-listed on the Cabinet's agenda and reviewed the council's plans and programs.

Following the meeting, the Regent stressed the importance of King Hussein's visits to U.S., Canada and France.

Speaking to reporters, the Crown Prince said these visits are part of Jordanian efforts to build bridges of confidence and cooperation with the industrialized countries and the EU.

The Prince called on the Arab Nation to heal its rifts and unity efforts to enhance inter-Arab relations so that the Arab Nation will be able to reap the fruits of peace.

The Regent also Saturday attended the graduation ceremony of several Royal Air Force pilots. The squadron commander delivered an address in which he thanked Prince Hassan and outlined the stages of training the pilots received at the course.

At the end of ceremony, which was held at Basman Palace, Prince Hassan distributed diplomas to the graduating officers and awarded those who excelled. The ceremony was attended by Chief of Staff of the Air Force and senior officers. So Saturday the Regent sent a cable to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on Iran's 30th anniversary. Prince Hassan had Mr. Rafsanjani's good wishes and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

Israel threatens 'action'
if Syria does not curb
attacks from S. Lebanon
Damascus says resistance will continue
Hizbollah warns of more rocket attacks

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Saturday warned Syria that Israel would take action if guerrilla attacks from Lebanon continued.

Lebanon's Hizbollah reiterated vows to rain down Katyusha rockets on northern Israel if the Jewish state shelled civilian areas in South Lebanon.

Syria expressed support for Lebanese resistance against Israel and said the Lebanese had the right to liberate their lands.

"The Lebanese resistance will go on as long as the Israeli occupation continues in the south of Lebanon because resistance is the natural and real response to this occupation," the official daily Tishreen said.

The paper did not refer specifically to the Israeli warning to Syria, the main foreign power broker in Lebanon, to curb fighters of Hizbollah who shelled northern Israel on Friday.

The shelling followed the assassination of a Hizbollah leader, Ruda Yassin, who died when his car was rocketed by an Israeli helicopter in South Lebanon.

"The Lebanese people have full right to resort to any method they find suitable to liberate their lands from the occupiers and the agents," Tishreen said.

It also urged the international community to prevent Israeli action.

Touring northern Israel, where a 17-year-old boy was killed and 12 people wounded in rocket attacks from Lebanon on Friday, Mr. Rabin said he asked U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to pressure Syria to rein in the Hizbollah guerrillas.

"We passed a message on to Christopher yesterday in which I said we saw what happened here as a gross violation of the agreement," Mr. Rabin told reporters, referring to a 1993 agreement between Israel, Hizbollah and Syria.

Israel committed not to attack Lebanon beyond the 15-kilometre border strip. Hizbollah agreed not to rocket Israel.

"We want to clarify this to the Syrians via the Americans, our partners in the understanding, and we cannot stand by if these violations continue," Mr. Rabin said.

"How we will act and when, I will of course not talk about it."

Hizbollah said after Friday's flare-up it would no longer honour the 1993 pact. "The Islamic Resistance's announcement to shell settlements in northern Palestine indicates our deep commitment to the principle of replying in kind and not to sit silent when (our) villages are targeted," Sheikh Nabil Qawooq, a Hizbollah politburo member, told reporters in South Lebanon.

The white-turbaned cleric was speaking in the town of Nabatiyeh hours before the

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Israel wants to call halt
to peace — Abed Rabbo

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestinian Culture Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo charged Saturday that Israel wanted to stop the peace process.

"The Israeli government is following a policy aimed at stopping the peace process," Mr. Abed Rabbo said after the weekly Palestinian National Authority (PNA) meeting here chaired by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Abed Rabbo condemned "Israel's closure of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, continued settlement-building in the occupied territories and the suspension of talks on the Israeli army redeployment" on the West Bank.

Local Government ministry Saeb Erakat said meanwhile Israeli and PLO negotiators would meet in Cairo on April 10 and 11 in a fresh bid to reach agreement on Palestinian self-rule elections and an Israeli army redeployment on the West Bank.

ment on the West Bank.

He warned against a further delay in an Israeli redeployment outside towns on the West Bank which was originally scheduled for last July.

"If (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin says again that there is no sacred date and we don't reach agreement by June, the Gaza-Jericho autonomy accord will no longer exist, Dr. Erakat said.

Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres set a July 1 target date for an agreement on elections and redeployment when they met last month.

Israel has balked at fixing a new date for a redeployment because of "security fears" for its 130,000 settlers on the West Bank. It demands Mr. Arafat first crack down on Palestinian militants.

The two sides' negotiators met in the Egyptian capital earlier this week and said

they made progress in drawing up plans for the Palestinian autonomy council.

The head of the Palestinian police said his forces are working in cooperation with Israelis to prevent militant violence but "weak facilities" are hindering their fight.

"There exist Palestinian-Israeli security committees coordinating efforts to fight terrorism," General Nasr Yusef told the Arab daily Al-Sabq Al Awsat.

He admitted that there are still shortcomings in the Palestinian police performance but they are "not out of neglect or apathy, but because of weak facilities and inexperience."

Gen. Yusef told the London-based newspaper that Palestinian security had foiled a number of "military operations to be carried out inside the self-rule areas and in Israel."

But he underlined that his

(Continued on page 7)

Army offensive killed 2,800
militants in Algeria — report

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The Algerian army killed 2,800 guerrillas and captured 200 others in a vast offensive in several regions of the country, the daily Liberté reported Saturday.

Citing "several sources," the newspaper said Algerian army units had also freed 116 women being detained by the guerrillas.

It said the recent offensive against armed Islamic fundamentalists included operations in the central 'Ain Defla region, the eastern Tebessa area and Mascara in the north.

A number of foreigners were among the 200 captured militants, the paper said. Previous press reports put the death toll from the recent offensives at about 1,300 guerrillas. None of the reports provide an estimate of government losses in the operations.

There has been no official confirmation of the reports. An unconfirmed communication from the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most radical of the Islamic movements, said it had lost more than 100 men in 'Ain Defla, 150 kilometres, west of

Algiers. The statement, signed by its presumed leader Abou Abdul Rahman Amine but not yet authenticated, also admitted that several GIA leaders were among the dead.

The daily L'Authentique, citing authoritative sources, said Saturday it was waiting for "important official news" on the "serious reverses suffered by the terrorist forces."

"The significance of the success of the security forces cannot be denied," it said, adding that the upcoming information could contain "surprises over the fate of important terrorist leaders."

Security forces two weeks ago launched a spate of attacks on groups in operations media reports said were the deadliest in the three years since fundamentalists began their guerrilla war after the cancellation of elections the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Fighting between the secular, army-backed regime and Islamic groups has left more than 30,000 dead since then. Press reports said Afghans,

Sudanese, Iranians, Moroccans, Eritreans and Libyans were fighting alongside the Islamic groups.

Algeria's ambassador to the United Nations, in a first official comment on the offensive, said the military was having "spectacular successes."

"It is quite true that there have been important operations taking place in Algeria, and with lots of casualties on the part of the militants there," Ambassador Hadj Osmane Bencherif told reporters.

In what was seen as further official confirmation of the extent of the military strike, Algeria's official news agency APS on Saturday picked up a report in another Algerian newspaper saying the GIA had been almost crushed.

It was the first time that APS has mentioned the two-week-long offensive.

In the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, an FIS leader said on Saturday that Algeria's government must accept opposition proposals to end three years of civil strife or face continued bloodshed.

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Regent
meets U.N.
official on
Sarajevo

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Saturday met with William Eagleton, the U.N. special coordinator for the city of Sarajevo.

The meeting at the Royal Court dealt with the situation in Sarajevo. Mr. Eagleton extended an invitation to Jordan to attend a donors conference which will be held in Vienna next June. The conference will focus on ways of helping the city of Sarajevo in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 900.

Mr. Eagleton expressed



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday greets William Eagleton, U.N. special coordinator for the city of Sarajevo, at the Royal Court (Petra photo). The meeting was attended by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai.

Baghdad
rejects
limited
oil sale

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's parliament unanimously rejected on Saturday a proposal by the U.S. and Britain to allow Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil to meet humanitarian needs.

The 250-member parliament voted on a motion put to it by Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh who, in an address opening the spring session, lashed out at the United States, the main backer of maintaining sanctions barring Iraqi oil exports.

"The U.S. persists in practicing aggression and despotism by preventing the (U.N.) Security Council from honoring its commitments towards Iraq," he told the deputies whose resolution backs views already expressed by high-ranking Iraqi officials.

"(The U.S.) is immorally trying to prolong the embargo against the people of Iraq," Mr. Saleh declared. He said Iraq's enemies, led by the United States, were pursuing "the harshest and meanest ways" against Iraq and urged "patience and steadfastness."

Iraq has been barred from exporting its oil under sanctions imposed on it by the United Nations after Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait in 1990. The Iraqis were driven out of the emirate by U.S.-led allies during the 1991 Gulf war.

Under a proposal to be put to the U.N. Security Council, Iraq would be allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over 180 days instead of \$1.6 billion under a previous scheme. It can be renewed for another 180 days if all goes well.

Iraq views the new plan as a U.S. and British ploy to circumvent provisions of a Gulf war resolution allowing Iraq free oil exports once it meets all U.N. weapons demands.

Under Gulf war ceasefire terms, Iraq is supposed to scrap all of its weapons of mass destruction. U.N. arms inspectors have said Iraq has complied with most demands but have still not certified that the job is done.

The plan for limited oil sales has drawn criticism from Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz, Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sahaf and Minister of Culture and Information Hamed Yousef Hummadi.

Mr. Saleh said Iraq only had "a limited period" to reach its objective of having the sanctions eased or lifted. "But it (the period) is full of difficulties and obstacles, making it heavy and hard. It is really a test period," he said.

Parliamentarians interviewed by Reuters said that rather than accept the offer, they preferred to cooperate with the U.N. Special Commission disarming Iraq until all demands are met.

Jordan demands Israel open
nuclear facilities for inspection

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has expressed serious concern over the potential danger to the Kingdom posed by Israel's nuclear facilities, particularly the Dimona reactor, and demanded Israel sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that will allow for international inspections of all atomic installations in the Jewish state.

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, in an interview with the Jerusalem Post, also said support for the Jordan-Israel peace treaty risked losing popular support unless the people feel tangible dividends of peace.

In the interview, conducted by Hillel Kuttler in Washington where Mr. Kabariti was accompanying His Majesty King Hussein to talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton, senior administration officials and congressmen, the foreign minister described Egypt's demand that Israel sign the NPT as "very accommodating and forthcoming."

"They are for the objectives of the treaty, but they want to know, also, how and when Israel could also be part of that treaty to give the sense that the area will not come under any Israeli nuclear umbrella we all reject," the Post quoted Mr. Kabariti as saying.

On Jordan's specific concern over Israel's Dimona facility in the Negev desert in the South, Mr. Kabariti described the plant as "the most

notorious" among Israeli nuclear installations, and noted that it was only 32 kilometres from the southern Jordanian town of Tafila.

"Especially when you talk about a quote-unquote Chernobyl-like incident, any kind of leakage or proliferation will definitely affect us environmentally and threaten the well-being and the health in the area," he said.

"So, it's been our policy to demand that the Israeli nuclear facility should be under close international inspection, maybe by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)," said the minister. "And that's why we are much for the NPT agreement, very much for its objectives."

See full text of the interview on page 7

Mr. Kabariti said Jordan had not made up its mind whether to sign the NPT when it comes up for renewal this month. "We've been discussing this issue with the Arab countries and the non-aligned countries," he said. The foreign minister said he was satisfied with the outcome of the meetings King Hussein held during his latest visit to the U.S. and the way the administration was handling a move to write off about \$488 million in Jordan's official debts to the U.S.

"We had the impression that we were caught in the middle of a partisan feud between the Republicans and Democrats, and our debt-relief programme was about

to be the victim of the dispute," the Post quoted Mr. Kabariti as saying in the interview, which was published on Friday.

However, the minister added, "I think things have been sorted out with the Congress and the administration and we were given the impression that will be very satisfactory for both (sides), Jordan, and the Congress ... But the full amount will be granted."

On the status of Jordanian-Israeli relations after the signing of the peace treaty, the foreign minister said ties should be seen at two levels — between governments and between people.

The government is "fully committed" to implementing

the peace treaty and is "negotiating in good faith and earnest" with Israel, he said. "Now if we are to talk about the general mood, the general feeling towards the peace treaty, I guess there is that large chunk of public opinion (which) supported the peace treaty on the basis of wait and see," he said.

"And this portion of the population are the people who are now leaning towards taking away their support. The support for the peace treaty is slipping away from among this group of people because they think it did not bring with it the expectations and the dividends they were expecting," Mr. Kabariti said.

Turkish leaflets urge
Kurd rebels to surrender

ZAKHO (Agencies) — Turkey, criticised by the West for its drive into Iraq, is showering propaganda leaflets on Kurdish guerrillas urging them to surrender and stop "chasing an empty dream," officers said on Saturday.

Turkish aircraft have scattered thousands of blue and white leaflets headed "a Youth's Confession" on Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels in mountains near the Iraqi city of Zakho.

The leaflet, signed by what the army says is a repentant rebel named Ruken, promises the guerrillas they will be well treated if they give themselves up.

"Why sacrifice our lives chasing an empty dream?" it says. Rebel forces in the area have supplies to last them for up to three months and the rugged terrain makes it difficult to drive them out by military means, an officer told Reuters.

About 35,000 Turkish troops have been hunting PKK fighters in northern Iraq since March 20, but many of the rebels are believed to have escaped deeper into the mountains.

Officers said three rebels in the area had surrendered since the operation began but

it was not clear if this was a result of the leaflet campaign. State-run Turkish television channel TRT, which can be seen in Iraq, has broadcast a similar message for the past week.

Planes have not bombed suspected rebel positions since the operation's first days, when they carried out dozens of sorties.

Anatolian news agency said on Saturday the army had killed 15 more rebels in northern Iraq, bringing the total of PKK fighters killed to more than 280, against a Turkish toll of 22 soldiers. The PKK says over 500 soldiers have died for the loss of about 20 rebels.

Turkey is to send 12,000 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Iraqi Kurdish civilians, Anatolian said.

The aid, mostly food and medicine, was being loaded on trucks of the Red Crescent near the Turkish-Iraqi border and could be sent in the next few days, it said.

Turkish military doctors at the village of Derkar near Zakho were treating Iraqi Kurds free of charge. "There are a lot of sick people here. We help them as well as we can and give them our own medicine," Dr. Zekeriya Sayin said.

JEDCO
outlines
programmes

AMMAN (Petra) — Director General of the Jordanian Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) Mohammad Halaqia said Saturday the corporation had contributed significantly to increasing the volume of Jordanian exports which in 1994 rose by 14 per cent over the previous year.

At a press conference, Dr. Halaqia said JEDCO had new plans of action for the coming stage in view of developments in the Middle East peace process and Jordan's application to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The corporation's board of directors has taken several decisions to encourage exports, including a reduction in commission charged by JEDCO over exports to Libya and Yemen to 0.5 per cent instead of one per cent and exempting exports of veterinary pharmaceuticals from commissions.

Dr. Halaqia said the corporation will conduct further studies on commissions charged over exports.

Panel approves Gulf war claims; no payment in sight

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A U.N. fund to pay compensation for deaths and physical injuries as well as material losses resulting from the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait has approved more claims, but it was not immediately known how many Jordanian applications were approved for payment or when claimants could expect to be paid.

A U.N. statement received by the Jordan Times said the Geneva-based governing council of the U.N. Compensation Commission approved awards to more than 162,800 claimants.

The statement said about 50,000 claims in category A — from those who were forced to flee Kuwait or Iraq as a result of the invasion — were approved.

Another 800 were approved in category B — those who suffered the death of a family member or serious injury — raising to more than 1,000 the number of approved claims in this group.

With the new approvals, the total number of claims approved by the governing council of the U.N. commission has reached more than 230,000 with an estimated value of \$870 million, the U.N. statement said.

With the most recent decisions of the governing council, all of the 95 governments

and 15 international organizations that have filed claims with the commission have now received compensation awards in at least one of three expedited categories of individual claims," it said.

The commission, which says it received "less than \$50 million" in funds since it was launched in late 1993, paid out \$5.5 million in 670 claims in mid-1994. It has frozen all further payments — regardless of approval of claims — until it receives more funds, a senior commission official said in January.

"We do not know when the approved claimants could receive the payments since funds are not yet available," said Michael Raboin, assistant secretary-general of the commission, who was visiting Jordan for talks with officials here on the work of the panel and the parameters it applies while assessing claims.

Two-hundred and forty-one claims from Jordanians worth \$982,000 have been settled, all of them in category B. The total number of Jordanian claims in this category is 813.

Jordanian claims number more than 100,000 in various categories set by the commission; more than two-thirds of these claims are in category A.

The commission's governing council, which is re-

sponsible for actual approval of claims as recommended by the commission, said in its latest statement that it was concerned over the "current financial situation of the compensation fund, in light of the lack of sufficient funds available for the payment of accumulated compensation awards."

It called for "prompt action in order to maintain the dynamics of the operation."

Funds for the compensation fund are supposed to come from the diversion of 30 per cent of all Iraqi oil exports as called for in U.N. Security Council Resolution 778 of October 1992. But as long as Iraqi oil sales remain frozen under international sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait, the fund has little to look forward to in revenues from this direction.

The "less than \$50 million" the fund received so far came from a special U.N. account to which several countries transferred frozen Iraqi oil assets as Resolution 778 called for.

Although the account received several hundred million dollars, the fund received only a part of it since the amount had to be distributed among five U.N. agencies dealing with separate areas related to the enforcement of the Security Council resolutions related to the Gulf crisis.



KOZYREV VISIT: Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev escorted by Israeli border guards visits the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during his tour in the

Middle East trying to boost the peace process between Israel and Arab countries (AFP photo)

Arabs to launch two new satellites

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states will launch two more commercial satellites in the next three years to face growing demand from regional television and telephone companies, the daily Al-Itihad reported Saturday.

Both satellites are being manufactured by the French air industries giant Aerospatiale, which has also put the previous three Arab satellites in orbit, according to Saad Al Bidna, director general of Arabsat, the Arab League's official space telecommunication institution.

The first satellite will be launched in 1996 and the second in 1998 and they had been financed mainly by Arabsat's own funds, Mr. Bidna told the Al-Itihad daily.

"Work on the manufacture of the second general of Arabsat satellites is proceeding on schedule. The first will be launched next year and we are planning to launch another one in 1998 due to increasing demand," he said. "Most of the channels in the first satellite had already been leased. The two have a strong capacity and would cover Europe, Asia and Africa."

Mr. Bidna did not mention the costs of the two new satellites, but Arabsat had contracted with the U.S. Hughes company for the project that was worth around \$250 million. The U.S. firm was dropped after disagreements on financial and technical terms of the contract, according to Hughes sources.

"The project could have been too costly for us," said a Hughes source who is visiting the UAE after his company won a \$120-million contract last week to upgrade the telecommunication network for the UAE army.

Arabsat has launched three satellites since 1985, nine years after it was established. Two of them are still in orbit while the life of the first one has expired.

Officials attending an Arabsat board meeting in Sharjah last week said the organisation had fully recovered from financial difficulties and was funding the bulk of its projects from its own resources.

They said this had prompted Arabsat board to slash a bank loan it sought last year to \$35 million from \$104 million.

Christopher pointing way to showdown on Iran

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Clinton administration is nearing critical decisions on stronger economic actions against Iran, with Secretary of State Warren Christopher pushing for stern measures.

Options under consideration include banning all American trade with Iran and prohibiting American oil companies from purchasing Iranian oil for sale abroad. Sale of Iranian oil in the United States already is prohibited.

Mr. Christopher has labelled Iran an "evil hand," denouncing it as the leading supporter of terrorism in the world and the most active opponent of the Arab-Israeli peace he is pursuing as a centrepiece of U.S. foreign policy.

However, even with the likely support of Anthony Lake, the national security adviser to President Bill Clinton, Mr. Christopher is not certain to carry the day when senior policymakers gather in the next week or two at the White House to consider punitive economic actions against Tehran.

Strong voices within the administration, including the Commerce Department, are concerned tougher restraints on trade with Iran could hurt American businesses that export there.

While direct purchases of Iranian oil for the U.S. market are prohibited now, sub-

sidaries of American companies are buying about \$4 billion of it annually on the open market. In addition, U.S. exports to Iran — much of it oilfield equipment — totalled \$616 million in 1993, according to Commerce Department figures.

"There are good arguments on all sides," a senior U.S. official told the Associated Press Friday. "The issues are on the table and they are moving toward resolution in the next week or two."

Mr. Christopher led the charge against a \$1 billion oil-development contract Conoco signed with Iran. President Clinton issued an order in March banning the deal after Mr. Christopher, upon learning that Conoco had hired his Los Angeles law firm to represent it, refused himself from the discussions.

There have been at least two meetings recently of officials from the National Security Council, the Pentagon, the State, Commerce and other interested agencies to weigh further moves against Iran.

Meanwhile, Senator Alfonse D'Amato has proposed legislation to ban all U.S. trade with Iran.

Provisions of Mr. D'Amato's legislation may be incorporated in an executive order from Mr. Clinton — if

the decision is taken to step up the pressure on Iran — said the senior U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said on Friday the United States was mostly hurting itself by trying to isolate Tehran.

"In a sermon at a mass Friday prayer meeting, broadcast on Tehran Radio, Mr. Rafsanjani said the United States was 'acting in a retaliatory and irrational way on Iranian questions because of two or three serious defeats America has suffered.'"

He said Washington's decision in March to block the oil deal between Conoco Inc and Iran only hurt the U.S. firm as several non-U.S. companies were willing to cooperate with Tehran.

"American politicians are acting so much out of grudge that they are cutting their own economic veins," Mr. Rafsanjani added.

"He told the crowd that U.S. pressure on Germany, Japan, France and other states had mostly failed. "These (countries) did not yield to America and went their own way."

But Mr. Rafsanjani admitted that the United States had succeeded in getting Japan to delay the payment of a loan to Iran, but Tehran was willing to accept some defeats for the sake of principle.

His remark triggered the traditional "Death to America" chant from the crowd that had gathered at Tehran University.

In Washington, Mr. Christopher said on Thursday Japan withheld the loan payment because of U.S. efforts.

"Now, that happens... because we've been trying to show the rest of the world that Iran is in a category almost all by itself in what they're doing to undermine the (Middle East) peace process and projecting terrorism around the world. So what we do has a real effect," he added.

Mr. Rafsanjani reminded the faithful that Russia had refused to end its nuclear cooperation with Iran despite U.S. pressure, reiterating that the programme was strictly peaceful.

"Feeling these defeats, U.S. politicians are acting irrationally. They are lying right out," he said.

"It is shameful for the defence minister of a superpower such as America to lie and say that Iran is storing chemical weapons on islands in the Persian Gulf," he added in reference to remarks by Defence Secretary William Perry on a recent Gulf tour.

"This behaviour is undignified of a superpower that should have control over its nerves and find the roots of its defeats," said Mr. Rafsanjani.

Mubarak heads for U.S. to discuss NPT, Libya and peace

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was heading for the United States Saturday for talks aimed at settling differences over renewal of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Mr. Mubarak and President Bill Clinton will also discuss the sanctions imposed on Libya, the Middle East peace process and bilateral ties at a meeting in Washington on Wednesday.

Egypt has threatened not to sign an extension of the NPT when it comes up for renewal at a United Nations conference next month unless Israel agrees to join up.

Washington has called for an unlimited and indefinite extension of the treaty.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa, who left for the United States Thursday to prepare Mr. Mubarak's visit, said the Libyan crisis would be discussed in detail and "Egypt has a specific point of view."

Libya has been under U.N. sanctions since April 1992 after refusing to hand over two suspects wanted for the December 1988 bombing of a U.S. airliner over the Scottish village of Lockerbie that killed 270 people.

Mr. Mubarak opposes Washington's call for the sanctions to be tightened. They include an air and arms embargo and freeze on sales of oil-related equipment.

U.S.-Egyptian relations were strained in late December when articles appeared in the U.S. press accusing Egypt of violating the embargo against Libya.

"There is no crisis nor tension between Egypt and the United States, but differences which must be tackled in a frank way," said Egypt's Ambassador to Washington Ahmed Maher, quoted by the Al-Ahram Weekly newspaper.



Hosni Mubarak

A senior Egyptian Foreign Ministry official said Cairo's dispute over the NPT was "with Israel, which has a nuclear programme capable of threatening Egypt's security."

Israel has up to 200 nuclear warheads, according to Western experts.

It has refused to sign the NPT pending an overall Middle East peace settlement, arguing that it is threatened by countries such as Iran, Iraq and Libya.

Egypt receives \$2.1 billion of U.S. aid annually and has embarked on a new economic partnership with Washington.

Some time down the line looms a three-sided battle, between Egypt, Congress and the U.S. administration, over the future of the aid programme which has brought Egypt more than \$30 billion since Anwar Sadat made peace with Israel in 1979.

Egyptian and U.S. officials say that, after 20 years working hand-in-hand in the Middle East, the relationship is strong enough to overcome minor disagreements.

But commentators on both sides say they detect a

deeper malaise, with each country rediscovering differences which they repressed when their need for each other was greater.

"Egypt can never be a satellite of the United States... it's natural that Egyptian policy should not be identical with U.S. policy," said Presidential adviser Osama Al Baz, who is now in Washington preparing for the visit.

"The present questioning of the basis of American-Egyptian relations... is unprecedented," said Ibrahim Nafie, editor of the Egyptian government newspaper Al-Ahram.

U.S. commentators, such as Thomas L. Friedman of the New York Times, have attributed the tension in part to Cairo resenting the loss of its old privileged position as sole mediator between Israel and all other Arab states.

Egypt may also be playing up because it fears lagging behind in the economic competition that peace might unleash in the Middle East.

But the other side of the coin is that Egypt is free to follow its own interests because it does not depend on U.S. largesse to the same extent as it once did.

Through much of the 1980s deliveries of U.S. wheat on generous credit were all that stood between the Egyptian government and possible bread riots.

Now, flush with more than \$17 billion in foreign reserves, the government pays cash for wheat from the lowest bidder.

U.S. military aid, at \$1.3 billion a year, plays a useful role in keeping the army happy but, apart from its contribution to the Gulf war in 1991 and a minor skirmish with Libya in 1978, Egypt has not fought a war for more than 20 years.

Shepherd says Turks made him human mine detector

LELKAN (R) — An old Iraqi Kurdish shepherd basked in the heat of a wood-burning stove, happy to be free of the Turkish soldiers he said had turned him into a human mine detector in their hunt for rebel Kurds.

The Turkish military dismissed the accusation as rebel "propaganda."

Interviewed in Lelkan, an Iraqi Kurdish village built into a snow-capped mountain, shepherd Nefos Hassan said soldiers forced a dozen villagers to help navigate the obscure paths of the Khawakur mountain range near the Iranian border.

"We had to walk ahead of the soldiers about five metres and they would make us go into caves where they thought the guerrillas may have laid traps," said Mr. Hassan, a man in his 60s wrapped in a tattered green wool jacket.

"Some of the soldiers had mine detectors... (some) times they would use us like a mine detector," Mr. Hassan said in an interview.

Turkey sent 35,000 soldiers into Iraq on March 20, aiming to destroy bases of rebels from the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) fighting for a homeland in southeast Turkey. The rugged terrain of Khawakur is a known PKK stronghold.

Early this week Mr. Hassan took his chances and escaped from the soldiers under cover of darkness.

"I thought, 'I am an old man. Maybe they will shoot me and I will die but maybe I will escape,'" said Mr. Hassan, who walked for a few hours through the mountains until reaching his home in a village down the road from Lelkan.

Chief military spokesman Colonel Dogu Silahcioglu,

asked if they used villagers as human mine detectors, said: "Never, not at all. Nothing like this has happened. These people have been forced to say this by the terrorists for propaganda purposes."

"We receive daily reports from all our units about relations with civilians, and this has not happened. These sort of accusations always surface in a conflict situation," he said.

A Turkish commander based in Khawakur said soldiers were using some villagers as guides. He did not comment further.

Kurds and Western aid workers in other parts of northern Iraq say Turkish troops have bombed, burned and looted villages, sparking international concern for Kurdish civilians. Ankara insists it is safeguarding civilians.

In the plush-green villages

that dot the mountains of the Khawakur region, dozens of people said men were taken away. About six men had run away from the soldiers or been let go.

"All I want to know is where my father is because nobody has told us anything since they took him away," said soft-spoken Yusuf Assad, a man in his 20s who warmed himself with other Iraqi Kurdish villagers beside the stove.

Villagers said the Turks arrived early in the 12-day-old operation, apparently by helicopter, and began rounding up men.

"I was asleep near my sheep when soldiers woke me up and told me to come with them to the mountains and show them where the PKK was hiding," said Hassan the shepherd.

The villagers, living in

communities made up of about 150 Iraqi Kurds each, said soldiers accused them of being PKK supporters and threatened to burn their villages to the ground if any shots were fired from the stone houses.

The sight of any army reminds Khawakur's Kurds of events that made them refugees twice over in the last eight years.

In the late 1980s Iraq forced many to leave their villages, often razing their homes in a bid to put down a rebellion. In 1991, when Baghdad attacked the Kurdish north at the end of the Gulf war, many Kurds were forced to flee again.

"Why doesn't somebody do something to help us?" shrieked a woman named Ferayoz, standing outside a house in Lelkan. "Is there no law to stop them?"

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 75111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Le Prince La Sirene
17:30 Pyramide
18:00 Tour Du Monde Tour Du Ciel
19:00 News In French
19:15 Ushuaia
19:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
20:30 Almost Home
21:00 The Album Show
21:30 Heartbeat
22:00 News in English
22:30 Ecstasy Film
22:59 The Hidden Room

PRAYER TIMES

6:00 (Sunrise) Fajr
12:30 (Sunrise) Duhr
16:12 'Asr
18:59 Maghreb
19:15 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swifelh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627283
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624591
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 627440
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661757
Terresanta Church, Tel. 623466
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 638543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625256

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654952

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675891

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The Kingdom will be affected by a depression, thus temperatures will drop with clouds appearing at different altitudes. Rainfall is also expected and winds northerly/moderate. In Agaba, winds will be southerly active and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 12/17
Agaba 17/26
Deserts 8/20
Jordan Valley 5/24
Yesterday's high temperatures:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman 26, Agaba 32 Humidity

readings: Amman 19 per cent,

Agaba 17 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Raib Zaitoun 888685
Dr. Mukhlis Hattas 819229
Dr. Jihad Zaidan 881148
Dr. Farouq Nouf 819220
Firas pharmacy 661912
Firdous pharmacy 623672
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Al-Najm pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qana (—)
Alquds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Mubashir Hijwaj 881217
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Control Centre 637111
Food Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 605200
Hotel Complaints 661176
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 605200
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 775111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussien Medical Centre 81381332
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann. 64428116
Akhil Maternity, J. Ann. 64424112
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 66417114
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 66722719
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 66416446
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710113
Al-Basht, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marja 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60234050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)902540
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)755555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)727275
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)747100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Bangkok (RJ)
06:25 Agaba (RJ)
07:15 Athens (RJ)
08:25 Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:45 Laraca (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
10:25 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:35 Brussels (RJ)
10:50 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
11:25 Paris (RJ)
12:40 London (RJ)
13:40 Athens (RJ)
14:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
15:10 Frankfurt (RJ)
15:20 Vienna (RJ)
15:30 Rome (RJ)
15:45 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:30 Sanaa (YV)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:00 Brussels (RJ)
05:00 Agaba (RJ)
06:25 Beirut (RJ)
07:15 Athens (RJ)
08:25 Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:45 Laraca (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
10:25 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
10:35 Brussels (RJ)
10:50 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
11:25 Paris (RJ)
12:40 London (RJ)
13:40 Athens (RJ)
14:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
15:10 Frankfurt (RJ)
15:20 Vienna (RJ)
15:30 Rome (RJ)
15:45 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:30 Sanaa (YV)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Underlower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Ban



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) receives visiting Vice President Eddin Ahmad (Petra photo)

Princess Basma receives UNDP official

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday received Vice President of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Rafi Eddin Ahmad, who is on a current visit to the country.

During the meeting they discussed ways of enhancing cooperation between the New York-based UNDP and Jordan at the governmental and non-governmental levels, particularly with the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF).

Mr. Ahmad, who has assumed his post last August, is a Pakistani national.

He has served in several posts in the U.N. Economic and Social Council as well as in the U.N.'s specialised committees for human rights.

On many occasions, Mr. Ahmad represented his country in the U.N.'s permanent committee.

Mr. Ahmad expressed his interest in cooperating with the fund and his keenness to reinforce relations with it and upgrade its performance.

1 person drowns, another missing in separate swimming accidents

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — One person died Friday and another is feared dead in two separate incidents in Wadi and Salt, police and Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports said.

In the first incident in Wadi Sheib, a 20-year-old man drowned in a farm water reservoir while swimming, said the reports.

According to police reports the victim's uncle said that he saw his nephew Khalil Mohammad waving for help before vanishing under the water.

The report said that bystanders in the area tried to rescue the youth, but their attempts failed.

A CDD official told the Jordan Times that farm water reservoirs are used for irrigation and they are not suitable for swimming.

In the second accident, CDD frogmen continued their search Saturday for the body of a 28-year-old man who reportedly drowned in Wadi Arab Dam.

A CDD official told the Jordan Times that the team searched the dam all day Friday and Saturday, but were unable to find the body.

Police reports said that the man, identified only as H.A.S., went for a picnic with his wife and his brother-in-law on Friday.

According to the victim's wife, her husband and her brother went to swim in the dam. The wife, who was not identified in the report, told police that her brother came out of the water because it was too cold, but her husband continued to swim farther away. She later heard him shouting for help, but he disappeared.

According to the CDD official, swimming is forbidden in all the country's dams and warning signs are posted to alert the public.

During March, police and CDD reports indicated that 11 people were drowned including two children who were found in cesspools in different areas in the Kingdom.

"These days most people go for picnics and swim in areas without knowing how to swim or having enough knowledge about the place they are swimming in, and this results in high numbers of casualties," the CDD official said.

The official added that most of the reported drowning cases last year involved people under the age of 25 and children.

He said that in 1994, 36 people drowned in 80 swimming accidents reported in the Kingdom.

"The main reason for such accidents is that people don't follow safety procedures and they swim in dangerous places or places that are off limits," he said.

Panel prepares for Arab children's conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The preparatory committee for the Arab Children's Conference, scheduled for July, held a meeting on Saturday to look into ways of increasing the participation of the Arab countries in the conference.

During the meeting, that was held at Noor Al Hussein Foundation, participants stressed the importance of the role of cultural advisors in promoting the conference's objectives.

Participants also stressed the need for exchanging visits between children in different Arab countries as well as holding cultural workshops aimed at increasing support for the 15th Arab Children's Conference.

The conference's programme includes a visit of Arab children to the Jordanian liberated territories and the different historical and archaeological sites in the Kingdom.

The conference, which will be held from July 18 to 23, is entitled "Tolerance and Solidarity in the Arab Culture." It will be inaugurated at the Roman amphitheatre to ensure the participation of the largest possible number of people as well as to raise public awareness of the importance of these events.

Visiting Italian professor shares his half century experience in computers with Jordanian students

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Invited by the Italian embassy in Amman, Italian professor and scientist Roberto Busa is currently visiting Jordan and lecturing on the subject of "Computer and Humanities — History and Perspectives of Fifty Years Spent to Byte Texts."

Three universities, namely, the University of Jordan, Al al Bayt University and Mu'ta University, arranged to receive Professor Busa and allow students the opportunity to benefit from his experience.

Data — to put it in computer terms — about Roberto Busa is not of the commonly found type. He is now 82 and seems as dynamic as a person half his age.

A Jesuit priest, fluent in eight languages, Italian, French, German, Spanish, English, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Professor Busa started using computers in 1949.

While some people still hesitate now, in 1995, wasting time arguing about their reliability or insufficient power, Prof. Busa never had second thoughts and fought with IBM executives back in the early fifties to make them work on his studies.

Like any serious data analyst, Prof. Busa never really cared for specific hardware or software details. As long as the work was correctly processed, the equipment or the programming language did not matter to him. Which does not mean he is not following the trend.

His work is now being transferred to CD-ROM (computer laser disc).

A pioneer of automation in linguistics, Prof. Busa has input a volume of work estimated at 500 million records of computer data, in about 50 years of continuous effort. The project has taken him to the U.S., the former U.S.S.R., Brazil, Europe, and other countries.

He is currently working with Milan Catholic University, in charge of the "Interdisciplinary Group of Researches for the Computerisation of the Signs of the Expression."

One of his major achievements is the computer entry, including full indexing and cross-referencing, of all the works of Saint Thomas — a 70,000-page work, assembled in 56 volumes.

His lectures in Jordan cover topics like grammatical analysis, thinking philosophy, words statistics and counting and semantics, always with the processing by computers in mind.

Prof. Busa has ideas in store for a couple of centuries more. He believes that a day will come when computers become not only extremely fast and powerful but also very easy and simple to use.

He rejects as ridiculous the idea that prevailed in the sixties and seventies that "for human thinking, machine is a dangerous enemy..."

Talking to the Jordan Times, he explained that the question about informatics is not "can the computer do it?" anymore, but rather, "how should we do it?"

Jordan to seek European Investment Bank financing for water, transport and environment sector projects

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan will formally present a list of proposed projects to the European Investment Bank (EIB) soon and seek EIB financing, officials said Saturday.

The officials were reporting on talks EIB Vice-President Arian Obolski held here last week with several ministers and senior officials on EIB-financed programmes under way in Jordan, and the Kingdom's future projects.

"We have to draw up a formal list of projects and forward it to the EIB and this is expected to be done in about a week's time," said an official.

According to the officials, who did not want to be identified, the proposed projects would include the water, transport and environment sectors. The proposals also include projects which were not mentioned in a presentation Jordan made at the Casablanca economic summit late last year, said the officials.

They said it was too early to discuss the specifics of the Jordanian request to the EIB.

The project proposals are expected to be closely discussed during the Amman economic summit, which is scheduled to be held in October.

Ms. Obolski's talks here included discussions on the approach to the Amman economic summit.

European diplomats said about one billion European Currency Units (ECUs), or about \$1.2 billion, remained in a 4.5 billion ECUs (\$5.4 billion) allocation made by the European Union (EU) for projects in the Mediterranean countries — stretching from Morocco to Turkey and including Jordan — during the period 1992-1996.

Jordan could seek financing from this allocation, said the diplomats.

European Commission aid for Jordan worth \$150 million, including about \$96 million in EIB loans, under a 1993-96 protocol came from this allocation. So did a nearly \$600 million assistance for the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho, the diplomats said.

Since Jordan and the then European Community signed an agreement in 1977, the Kingdom has received 329 million ECUs (\$395 million) in assistance, including 223 million ECUs (\$267) million in EIB loans.

The European Commission has proposed a \$5.5 billion (\$6.6 billion) allocation for the Mediterranean region for the period 1996-99.

Jordan could receive preferential treatment under the proposed allocation in view of the "partnership agreement" the EU is offering the Kingdom, the European diplomats said. No specific details were available.

The European Union, a strong supporter of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26, is financing feasibility studies for water projects in the Jordan Valley. The water projects are part of the peace treaty under which Israel agreed to respect Jordan's share of water from the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers.

Israel and Jordan agreed in February that the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) will manage the Jordan Valley water projects, estimated to cost about \$535 million.

The European Union might be willing to study the possibility of financing some of the projects in partnership with other donors after the feasibility studies are conducted, according to the diplomats.

The feasibility studies will include a close scrutiny of means to finance the projects, they said.

Reports in the Israeli press said that German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had agreed to finance the projects with up to \$400 million during a meeting with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in Bonn last month. The reports could not be independently confirmed.

AUB medical conference tackles significant issues; solidifies relations between professors, graduates

By Rima Cortbawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As well as presenting valuable medical advice and information not only to Jordanian specialists but also to the general public, the two-day medical conference organised by the American University of Beirut (AUB) Alumni Club which ended Saturday "succeeded in its primary objective of maintaining solid bridges between AUB medical professors and Jordanian AUB graduate doctors," said Majed Ghosheh, president of the Amman AUB Alumni Club.

The conference featured lectures and presentations by 28 prominent AUB professors who tackled diverse topics in education and internal medicine, surgery, paediatrics, endocrinology, neurology, pathology, endoscopy, cancer and hematology.

The keynote address presented by Ibrahim Salti, AUB professor of medicine, on Friday "covered an extremely interesting survey of university achievements in the Arab World since the 50s and established a comparison between education in different countries of the region," said Farid Yagham, a well-known plastic surgeon in Amman.

In his address, Dr. Salti presented up-to-date figures on the numbers of Arab universities established since 1800, student numbers in the Arab World compared to other countries, distribution of enrolment in different Arab countries, numbers of Arab university teachers and public expenditure on higher education in different countries.

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) statistics outlined in his lecture indicated a remarkable difference in the annual expenditure on research and development between the Arab World and other countries, the latter allocating more than 25 times the sums allotted by the former.

Also Dr. Salti discussed present concerns and problems affecting the faculty and quality of education in the Arab World and dealt with future prospects recommending "non-government support to both private and state universities" as a vital step in advancing education so that it could meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Another presentation that encouraged public attendance on Friday was the one given by Karam Karam, chairman of the AUB Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, on "menopause."

Included in Dr. Karam's lecture was the latest research on hormone, specifically estrogen, replacement therapy (ERT) from a risk-benefit perspective. Studies illustrated that "ERT has been shown to increase overall survival rates" of women undergoing cessation of ovarian proper functioning (in approaching menopause), due to the hormone's action of decreasing incidences of heart attacks, which are "the leading cause of death for women," osteoporosis, and possibly cancer, including breast cancer.

Saturday's lecture included two "informative lectures on screening for prostate cancer and controversy in breast cancer," according to Dr. Ghosheh, who is a Jordanian radiologist.

The lecture on prostate cancer, presented by Mohammad Bulbul, AUB associate clinical professor of surgery, Division of Urology, underscored the necessity of 50 to 70-year-old men undergoing two screening tests: The prostate specific antigen (PSA) and the digital rectal examination (DRE) tests.

The breast cancer lecture by Kamal Bikhazi, AUB associate clinical professor of surgery, encouraged women's awareness of the subject and highlighted the importance of combining the efforts of the patient, family physician, radiologist and surgeon in screening due to the great controversy revolving around the most favourable treatment of breast cancer.

With the closing remarks from AUB Dean of the Medical School Samir Najjar and Dr. Ghosheh, the first, but not last, conference organised by AUB Alumni Club was concluded.

"We hope to keep this tradition with added modifications each year. Next year we will hopefully invite Jordanian and international doctors to present some of their work," said Dr. Ghosheh.

Since its establishment in 1963, the AUB a highly regarded institution of higher learning in the region and internationally, has maintained an unparalleled reputation through consistent hard work to ensure high standards of academic achievements.

"This is vividly witnessed in the calibre of Jordanian AUB graduates who hold key positions in both public and private sectors of the Kingdom," said Samir Jahshan, member of the conference organising committee.

In fact eight of the current ministers are AUB graduates, and all major private hospitals built in Jordan since 1945 have been established by AUB graduates, according to Dr. Jahshan.

Since its start-up in 1972, the AUB Alumni Club, Amman, has been working to provide support for the AUB and maintain its links with the graduates especially in medicine.

"Exchange of information and medical research is very important for developing medicine in Jordan," Dr. Ghosheh said.

Danish bank agrees in principle to finance Jordanian projects

COPENHAGEN (Petra) — The Danish Development Bank has agreed in principle to partially finance several development projects in Jordan, according to president of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA) Hamdi Tabaa who led a Jordanian business team on a visit to Denmark.

Mr. Tabaa said the decision was taken following a meeting with the Jordanian business delegation which on Saturday concluded its visit to Denmark and left for Paris.

He said officials at the bank agreed in principle to finance projects in Jordan and received a list of projects that can be carried out in the Kingdom, noting that Denmark will finance 30 per cent of the costs of these projects.

The Jordanian delegation, he said, also reached an agreement with Danish businessmen to set up a Jordanian-Danish businessmen's council, adding that the agreement will be concluded during a visit by the Queen of Denmark to Jordan in October. He said the Queen will be accompanied by a large delegation of Danish businesspersons.

Astra Establishment for Commercial Agencies Announces the arrival of Givenchy's international beautician Mr. Francois Dif

who will offer his advice on new skin care products and their uses as well as Givenchy's latest cosmetic products. During his week long stay in Amman, Mr. Dif's programme will be as follows:

- * Sunday April 2 at Astra Exhibition, Wasfi Tal Street, Bahjat Gardens Centre.
- * Monday April 3 at Samah Store, the Housing Bank Centre
- * Tuesday April 4 at Snobar Pharmacy, Shmeisani
- * Wednesday April 5 at Abu Zuhdi Stores, downtown.
- * Thursday April 6 at Luma Pharmacy, Fifth Circle, opposite the Arab Heart Surgery Centre.

From 10 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. and from 4-7.30 p.m.



SECOND ARAB DRAMA FESTIVAL

Two plays entitled "You Are Not Yourself" and "The Eyes of Maria and Sindbad" respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

Film entitled "Tobor The Great" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- * Exhibition of graphic works by Rafiq Labham at Darat Al Funun. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists.
- * Exhibition of art by Leo Rialp at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).

* Exhibition of prize-winning paintings by Czech students at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition entitled "Dialogue Between the Nature and the Artist" by landscape painter Ahmad Mounib.

* Exhibition of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Balqa Art Gallery, Fuhais.

* Exhibition of oil paintings by Youssef Badawi at Alia Art Gallery.

End of U.S. military role pushes Haiti into new era

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (R) — With military responsibility for Haiti officially out of U.S. hands, the impoverished Caribbean nation Saturday began a new era in its search for stability.

Haitians briefly forgot the woes of unemployment and high prices during President Bill Clinton's 10-hour visit to the Haitian capital Friday, but fears for security in the face of a damaged economy and a rising crime wave were not far off.

"We celebrate the restoration of democracy to your country. Never again must it be stolen away," Mr. Clinton told cheering crowds. He then quickly warned them not to expect miracles. "Justice does not bloom overnight."

"I don't think they want us to leave," said Petty Officer Bill Kennedy as he watched the ceremony marking the transfer of peacekeeping duties to the United Nations from the U.S.-led force.

U.S. officials and Mr. Clinton have stressed that Haiti must New York on the essentials: building a judicial system and training a police force.

Hours after Mr. Clinton left, gunshots were heard at Haiti's National Penitentiary and witnesses said there was a disturbance inside the pris-

on. It is unknown what led up to the gunfire at the prison in Port-Au-Prince. U.N. officials said details were unlikely until later Saturday.

For many in Haiti, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's restoration to power by multinational forces six months ago signalled a chance to shake the legacy of political violence that stretches back to the country's birth in 1804 after a revolt by African slaves.

In its 190 years of existence, nine of Haiti's 41 heads of state declared themselves heads of state for life, and 29 were assassinated or overthrown.

Continuing the pattern of political violence, Haiti was rocked by the assassination of a leading opponent of Mr. Aristide just four days before Mr. Clinton's visit.

Lawyer Mireille Durocher Bertin, 34, and an airplane pilot and client of hers, Eugene Baillergeau, were machine-gunned in broad daylight as they were driving in Port-Au-Prince Tuesday.

Raymond Kelly, a former New York police commissioner helping to train Haitian police officers, called the Bertin murder disturbing.

"What you have to be concerned about is starting a cycle of revenge that we've seen actually throughout

Haiti's history," he said.

Haitian investigators, assisted by the FBI, continued their probe into the alleged assassination plot against Ms. Bertin Saturday. On Friday, Patrick Brutus, a friend and political ally of Ms. Bertin, also claimed to have received death threats.

Mr. Aristide's minister of the interior, Modeste Beaubrun, has been implicated in the murder by three suspects, according to White House officials.

The murder was noticed in Washington, where on Friday one of Mr. Clinton's chief political rivals, Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, downplayed Haiti's progress and noted that "political assassination appears to be on the rise."

Sen. Dole said the U.S. costs for Haiti would go up to \$2 billion or more than questioned "whether we can afford \$2 billion for Haiti."

Meanwhile, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, worried about the continued poverty in Haiti, said the private sector would hold back needed investments until order was restored and legislative elections were held.

Speaking to reporters accompanying him on his plane late Friday, the secretary-general said he told Mr. Aristide

while attending a ceremony here that U.N. peacekeepers could not be responsible for security.

Street crime has been rising, interspersed with political killings, and Mr. Aristide wants foreign troops to disarm gunmen while a new police force, without ties to the previous brutal military regime, is being trained.

"And I was very clear to avoid any misunderstanding that the United Nations is not able and we don't have the mandate to do anybody's operation," Dr. Ghali said.

"We are ready to assist (but) this will be his own responsibility," he said.

The United Nations, which took over peacekeeping responsibilities from the United States Friday at a gala ceremony, has a force of only 6,000 soldiers and 900 civilian police.

Local and national legislative elections are scheduled for mid-June and Dr. Ghali said they should be held without delay. Mr. Aristide's presidential term expires in a year.

Otherwise, he said, Mr. Aristide would "not receive the support of the private sector which is not ready to invest in Haiti before the result of the elections, before being sure they have a new government."



U.S. President Bill Clinton shakes hands with a U.S. soldier after speaking to troops at Warrior Base in Port-Au-Prince. Warrior Base is one of the base camps set up by the multinational force in Haiti. In his speech Mr.

Clinton said, "now the world knows once again that the United States will honour its commitment and stand up for freedom" (AFP photo)

Romania crash black boxes recovered

BUCHAREST (R) — Air accident investigators Saturday recovered the black box flight recorders from a Tarom Romanian Airlines Airbus which crashed Friday, killing all 60 people on board, airline officials said at the scene.

"We found the two black boxes of the plane in the wreckage today. They will be sent to be decoded by a special committee. I don't know how long this will take," Tarom Chief Engineer Pavel Postaru told Reuters.

The airline has given no clues as to the cause of the crash but was quick to rule out pilot error. One witness has reported seeing an explosion on the Airbus A310 aircraft before it plunged to the ground minutes after takeoff for Brussels.

Investigators from makers Airbus Industrie, French aviation authorities and Romania scoured the burnt-out wreckage of the aircraft Saturday in a field where the

plane crashed in heavy snow near Bucharest's Otopeni Airport.

Soldiers surrounded the scorched field where debris, few pieces larger than one or two metres long, lay scattered over a football pitch-sized area.

Forty-nine passengers died in the crash, 32 Belgians, nine Romanians, three Americans and two Spaniards, as well as one each from France, the Netherlands and Thailand. The 11-strong Romanian crew also perished.

A few relatives of Romanians killed in the crash walked along the ice-covered railway line next to the site, staring silently across the field where tiny red flags marked bodies.

Bright sunshine gave investigators relief from the snow and rain that was falling when the Airbus crashed at 9.11 a.m. (0611 GMT) Friday morning, just three minutes

after takeoff. Tarom has grounded its two other Airbus A310s pending the inquiry.

"We exclude any error by the pilot as the cause of this catastrophe but we look at all other possibilities, including the possibility of an explosion on board the aircraft," Tarom Director-General Gheorghe Racaru said Friday night.

The same flight to Brussels was the subject of a bomb threat on March 15, forcing the Boeing 737 flying the route to divert to the western Romanian city of Timisoara. No device was found.

Another of Tarom's three Airbus aircraft went into a steep dive over Paris last September, only to be pulled out at the last moment.

French air accident investigators cleared the Airbus of blame and warned pilots to respect speed limits built into the aircraft's sophisticated control systems.

Goodbye to clicks and clacks

NORFOLK, Virginia (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard turned off its morse code equipment after nearly a century of monitoring telegraph distress calls such as the Titanic's 1912 collision with an iceberg. The reason: "Modern technology," says Jim Wren, a Coast Guard master chief who has been a radioman for 23 1/2 years. "We've just found more rapid and secure ways of communicating."

But as the equipment was shut off Friday some veteran radiomen complained that satellites and automatic navigation beacons don't have the same personal touch as the keyed "dots" and "dashes" the Coast Guard has sent and received since the early 1900s. "It's the human touch," says Petty Officer Tony Turner, a 10-year radioman at the Coast Guard's Atlantic Communications Station in Chesapeake. "It's coming from a person's hand, through the air, into another man's ear — and there's no language barrier."

"I'm not real excited about this," Officer Wren said. "It's a sad moment." A group of local radio operators gathered at the Chesapeake station to bid farewell to the familiar clicks and clacks that carried news about ocean storms, ship arrivals and departures and sea emergencies. The station's final morse message was signed off at 7:19 p.m. EST (0019 GMT).

Similar switchoffs occurred at the Coast Guard Communications Centres in Boston, Miami, New Orleans, San Francisco, Honolulu, and Kodiak, Alaska. "I think it's the right thing to do, but I understand the nostalgia," said Cmdr. Fred Montoya at the Chesapeake Centre. "It's something these guys are brought up with, something they believe is the best."

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Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma (left) talks with U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry (right) during their meeting in Kiev. Mr. Perry is on a two-day visit to Ukraine (AFP photo)

Perry flies off to Ukraine base to see removal of Soviet missile

KIEV (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry flew off to a Ukrainian military base Saturday to watch the removal of a former Soviet missile once aimed at the West.

"We're going to see how... fast the nuclear disarmament has actually gone and that two-thirds of the warheads have already been removed," Mr. Perry said in an interview with Ukraine's independent television station Nova Nova Friday.

Mr. Perry has spent two days in Kiev discussing the country's progress in going non-nuclear, examining details of forthcoming joint military exercises and preparing the ground for a visit by President Bill Clinton in early May.

He was taken to a missile base at Pervomaisk, 300

kilometres south of Kiev, to witness the removal from a concrete silo of a six-warhead SS-19 missile deployed in the Soviet era.

Ukraine's share of the Soviet nuclear arsenal included 130 SS-19s and 46 of the more sophisticated 10-warhead SS-24s. In a year Ukraine has stripped the warheads from all its SS-24s and more than half its SS-19s.

Mr. Perry met President Leonid Kuchma at the outset of a six-day visit to four former Soviet republics. He praised Ukraine's progress in disarmament, and said relations between the two countries were "very strong and... getting stronger."

Mr. Kuchma told him Ukraine intended to take an active part in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. The former Soviet re-

public was one of the first signatories.

Since Mr. Perry last toured Pervomaisk a year ago the former Soviet republic has joined the nuclear non-proliferation treaty — a move which improved relations between Kiev and Washington.

Mr. Perry was to sign an agreement Saturday extending an additional \$20 million to help impoverished Ukraine cope with the costs of ridding itself of missiles.

The deal brings Washington's contribution to making Ukraine a non-nuclear state to \$205 million.

Mr. Perry told journalists on his way to Kiev that his visit sought to prevent a resurgence of a nuclear threat in the former Soviet Union, especially in Russia, "the only nation that still has the capability to destroy the United States."

At an official inquiry ordered by Mr. Ramos, a senior forensic scientist said Maga had suffered head injuries and four fractured ribs.

Manila wants neutral opinion on maid's death

MANILA (R) — Philippine President Fidel Ramos wants an impartial, third party opinion to resolve conflicting autopsy reports on a Filipina maid killed in Singapore, the presidential palace said Saturday.

It said Mr. Ramos had ordered the Department of Foreign Affairs to ask Singapore for a possible impartial judgment from a third party on contradictory reports over the death of Delia Maga.

The palace statement said Mr. Ramos had directed the department to "contact the Singapore government so that an agreed third party or independent/competent entity to both can be identified and consulted immediately."

Maga was killed in 1991 and Singapore police charged another Filipina maid Flor Contemplacion with her murder. Contemplacion was also accused of killing a three-year-old Singaporean boy.

Contemplacion, a 42-year-old mother of four, was hanged in Singapore on March 17 for the double murders she had confessed to committing.

Her execution outraged many Filipinos who believe she was a victim of a frameup.

At an official inquiry ordered by Mr. Ramos, a senior forensic scientist said Maga had suffered head injuries and four fractured ribs.

New witness did not see Simpson's car at key time

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A surprise witness raised new doubts about O.J. Simpson's alibi, testifying he didn't see Simpson's Bronco outside his estate the night of two murders but did spot it parked at the curb early the next morning.

Charles Cale, a Simpson neighbour and a recent addition to the prosecution's case, said Friday that he was walking his dog between 9:30 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. on June 12 and did not see the vehicle that prosecutors allege Simpson used to drive two miles (three kilometres) to Nicole Brown Simpson's condominium to commit the murders as late as 10:15 p.m.

"Are you certain the Bronco was not parked near the gate at Rockingham (Avenue) that Sunday evening?" Deputy District Attorney Christopher Darden asked.

"I'm very certain," he said. Simpson maintains the Bronco was parked there all evening and that he was at home at the time Ms. Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman were fatally slashed. The vehicle was discovered the next morning by police detectives, who have testified they found blood just above the Bronco's door

handle. Mr. Cale's testimony strengthened the timeline prosecutors have been sketching for the night of the murders, seeking to show Simpson had the opportunity to kill.

Simpson returned home, in a Bentley, from a trip to McDonald's about 9:33 p.m., his houseguest Brian "Kato" Kaellin testified earlier.

Prosecutors believe the murders were committed about 10:15 p.m. and base that time on the unusual howling of a dog heard by several witnesses. Authorities say blood recovered from inside the Bronco matches that of the victims.

Simpson, 47, a former professional football star turned movie actor and television sports commentator, is one of the most famous Americans ever accused of murder. He faces life prison if convicted.

Simpson's defence appeared caught unprepared for Mr. Cale's testimony. It was revealed in court that even though Mr. Cale gave his statement to police in January, a defence investigator didn't try to contact him until Wednesday afternoon, when Mr. Cale declined an interview because he didn't

feel well. The defence did not talk with Mr. Cale before he took the stand.

Mr. Cale, who described himself as a self-employed investor who lives within a quarter-mile of Simpson's estate, said he saw the Bronco about 7 a.m. the next day as he was being driven to the airport for a trip to Canada.

"I was surprised to see it," Mr. Cale said. "I noticed that it was parked at sort of a strange angle. Also, I had not noticed it the prior day, the prior evening."

In addition to Mr. Cale, limousine driver Allan Park also testified he saw no Bronco parked on Rockingham that night. He arrived at Simpson's home at 10:22 p.m.

Mr. Cale's description of the parked Bronco, with "the rear wheels... out a little bit," backed up observations made by detectives when they examined the car the morning after the killings.

Police did not interview Mr. Cale until Jan. 25, some time after a friend of Mr. Cale's contacted authorities to recount a conversation they'd had about the Bronco.

During cross-examination, defence attorney Robert Shapiro pressed Mr. Cale why he

hadn't said anything about the Bronco until recently. Mr. Cale said he never thought about the Bronco until this year, when news reports indicated the vehicle's location had become central to Simpson's alibi that he was home.

Rosa Lopez, a maid who worked for Simpson's next-door neighbour, insists she saw the Bronco parked outside Simpson's estate shortly after 10 p.m. last June 12.

The judge in the Simpson trial barred news photographers from using a remote camera Thursday and Friday after his picture was taken as the device was undergoing a needed test during a break.

"I really felt that it was kind of a nice feature photo to an otherwise depressing story," said Vince Bucci, a freelancer working for AFP.

Mr. Bucci, acting on behalf of photographers from four other news organisations which take turns operating the remote camera, was testing the device which had been malfunctioning prior to a lunch break during Wednesday's proceedings.

As part of the test, he photographed Judge Lance Ito giving a tour of the courtroom to a group of students,

Soong sisters' saga finally under way in China

HONG KONG (AFP) — It seemed to take forever to get the cast and backers together, but Hong Kong director Mabel Cheung's ambitious biographical saga of China's powerful Soong sisters is finally under way.

Filming of the \$5.5 million Soong Dynasty got under way last week in Tianjin City, east of Beijing, a spokesman for Seasonal Films Ltd. in Hong Kong said Wednesday.

Two years in the planning, the celluloid story of the most politically powerful women in pre-Communist China looked doomed in February after one of its stars, Joan Chen, Hollywood's best-known Chinese actress, became pregnant. Some investors were also reportedly unhappy with the project and pulled out, but financing now has been secured from Hong Kong's biggest film studio Golden Harvest, and Japan's Fuji Television. In the starring roles are Berlin Film Festival prize-winner Maggie Cheung, Malaysian-born Kung Fu superstar Michelle Yeoh, and Los Angeles-based Shanghai actress Vivian Wu. Filming is expected to continue through May, in locations as diverse as Beijing, Shanghai and the Sino-Russian border, as well as Japan. The Soong sisters included Soong Mei-Ling, wife of Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-Shek, and Soong Ching-Ling, who married the father of Republican China, Sun Yat-Sen, and later sided with Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

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Refugee exodus stalled in Burundi

GASHOHO, Burundi (AP) — Tens of thousands of frightened Rwandan refugees camped in misery by the side of a road Saturday, undecided whether to return to the camps they had fled or plot on with the hope of entering Tanzania.

"It's really wait and see," said Paul Stromberg, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), whose field workers were desperately trying to turn back the human tide.

Most of the 50,000 refugees — who arrived from neighbouring Rwanda last year — halted Friday when Tanzania closed its border with Burundi.

"We prefer to stay here until we get permission to move on," Eric Kompanyi, a leader of the refugees, told reporters. "We are deciding what to do."

The refugees are Hutus who sought refuge in Burundi last year, fearing reprisals for the massacres of 500,000 people in their homeland. Most victims were Tutsis.

The killings were directed by extremist Hutu politicians and carried out by elements of the Rwandan army, ragtag militias, and in some cases, neighbours and former friends of the victims.

A rebel Tutsi army defeated the government, sending its officials and military fleeing into exile. About 2 million civilians joined them, crossing the borders into Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire.

The latest exodus was prompted by an attack Monday in one of seven Rwandan refugee camps near the north-central town of Ngazi.

Twelve Rwandan refugees were killed and 22 wounded. Government officials and aid workers say they don't know who the "attackers" were, but the refugees assumed they were Tutsis bent on revenge.

Just a few kilometres down the road from Gashoho — a town halfway along the 80-kilometre (50-mile) route to



Rwandan Hutu refugees flee camps in northern Burundi towards the Tanzanian border as new murderous clashes between Hutu civilians and Tutsi troops were reported. Tanzania closed the border with Burundi to halt the exodus. A U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman in Nairobi said there were some 55,000 refugees on the road in a column stretching for 20 kilometres (AFP photo)

Tanzania — is a village housing a Burundi military outpost and a camp of displaced Burundian Tutsis. Burundi's army is overwhelmingly Tutsi.

Fear of passing through that village apparently fueled the indecision of the 50,000 Hutu refugees on whether to push on toward Tanzania.

As they pondered their next move, the refugees began setting up a makeshift camp along miles of the road, using plastic sheeting to construct flimsy shelters, cooking over open fires and selling food among themselves.

The International Red Cross distributed water from tanker trucks and U.N. officials sought mostly in vain to get refugees to return to their camps.

The U.N. refugee organisation brought nine trucks to Gashoho in its attempt to persuade the refugees to return, but nobody boarded them.

Russia discusses ways to restore Chechnya

MOSCOW (Agencies) — With the last major bastion captured in Chechnya, Russian authorities turned their attention Saturday to how to restore a region damaged in 16 weeks of fighting.

A special government commission chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets met in Moscow to discuss the revival of Chechnya, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The agency quoted First Deputy Economics Minister Andrei Shapovalov as saying that restoration works would cost 5.3 trillion roubles (more than \$1 billion) in 1995 alone. He said priorities were water, energy, food supplies and housing.

Commercial banks will be invited to help restore the fuel and energy complex of Chechnya, whose oil-processing industry is vital for the Russian economy.

The European Union (EU) issued a warning to Russia Saturday of the consequences of the Chechen crisis on Moscow's future relations with the 15-nation bloc.

"The European Union attaches importance to its relations with Russia which it wants to develop in a spirit of cooperation and partnership," the EU's current president France said in a

statement on behalf of the bloc. "It is worried on this account about the possible consequences of the Chechen crisis on political relations in Europe," it said.

Russia sent thousands of troops backed by tanks and aircraft to end Chechnya's independence bid on Dec. 11, but has been unable to quell dogged resistance by local fighters.

Grozny was captured in February after weeks of fierce air and artillery bombardment and street fighting which left the city, once home to 400,000 people, in ruins.

Thousands of people, mostly civilians, have been killed.

This week, the Russians will take adequate measures if the remaining forces of Dudayev try to launch an offensive, TASS quoted him as saying.

Other Russian officials dismissed the danger of a wide-scale partisan war.

Russian News Agency (RIA) quoted the commander of the Russian land forces, Vladimir Semynov as saying: "I doubt that a big partisan war is possible."

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Some Russian defence experts believe that, away from the big towns, the Chechen fighters will be cruelly exposed in their mountain bases

over yet. TASS said there was fighting around Gudermes Saturday.

The rebels, led by Dzhokhar Dudayev whom Russian forces have not been able to capture, have made no secret of their intention to launch a guerrilla campaign from the Caucasus Mountains.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev warned them Saturday against such an attempt.

"Russian Armed Forces will take adequate measures if the remaining forces of Dudayev try to launch an offensive," TASS quoted him as saying.

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Some Russian defence experts believe that, away from the big towns, the Chechen fighters will be cruelly exposed in their mountain bases

to strikes from Russian warplanes.

This vulnerability will increase with the end of winter and the onset of drier weather, these experts argue.

Russian artillery pounded the Chechen town of Shali Saturday despite Moscow's claims that the former separatist stronghold fell under its control 24 hours earlier.

Shells were falling on the city centre at the rate of one every five minutes, Chechen sources said.

Chechen separatists denied Saturday that they had totally abandoned the city, telling AFP at the gates of the town that a handful of shock troops remained.

Chechen fighters earlier moved their military base to the mountain village of Vedeno, 30 kilometres south of Grozny, and were preparing for Russian air attacks there.

"Now they will attack us in the mountains but we will not give up, we would rather die," Nasir Asaleyev, the rebels' deputy commander in Vedeno, told AFP.

Mr. Asaleyev admitted Saturday the Russians had captured Gudermes, Chechnya's second biggest city and the last urban bastion of the secessionists after Shali.

"We could not say Gudermes was still in our hands," Mr. Asaleyev said.

However, the Chechen source at Khadiji-Yurt said Saturday that violent street fighting had persisted throughout Friday night in the city.

Several separatists have said they believe the war will be far from over by May 9, the day of the 50th anniversary commemorations of V-E Day, as predicted by Gen. Grachev.

Gen. Grachev stressed Saturday in Moscow that while some guerrilla warfare will undoubtedly continue through coming weeks, Russia sees the war as an internal affair with little bearing on the international community.

Speaking to a youth organisation in Moscow, Gen. Grachev said he believed the war would not have a harmful effect on a summit meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton next month since it is a domestic problem which "does not affect in any way the security of the United States."

Gen. Grachev confirmed he would be discussing the situation in Chechnya with U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry during talks Sunday and Monday in Moscow.

Croatia hails, Serbs condemn new U.N. mandate

ZAGREB (R) — Croatia claimed political victory Saturday in obtaining a revamped U.N. force mandate tailored to affirm its sovereignty over territory held by rebel minority Serbs.

But the Krajina Serbs blasted the changes, which they said were aimed at dismantling their breakaway state, and suggested they may demand a U.N. withdrawal from their domain.

Friday's U.N. Security Council action averted a disastrous spread of the Yugoslav ethnic conflict beyond Bosnia's borders by at least symbolically fulfilling conditions posed by Croatia to keep 12,000 peacekeepers on its soil.

But the Council resolution was purposely vague to gloss over profound Croatia-Serb differences on the nature of a new mandate which mediators will be hard pressed to reconcile in follow-up talks this month to implement it.

The Council renewed U.N. operations in three ex-Yugoslav republics simultaneously until Nov. 30 but changed the name and duties of the contingent in Croatia after Zagreb threatened to expel peacekeepers deployed on ceasefire lines.

Acting hours before the expiry of the old mandate, the Security Council replaced it with one bearing a new name whose acronym — UN-CRO — alludes to the word "Croatia."

The new mission would also shift some international troops from guarding internal truce lines to "controlling" external borders over which arms supplies have flowed to Krajina Serbs.

"(This is) a diplomatic victory for Croatia," said Momir Zuzul, Zagreb's envoy to the United Nations based in Geneva.

In theory, the new mandate would encourage the Serbs to negotiate on "reintegration" in Croatia with local autonomy to end a conflict sparked by their 1991 uprising against Zagreb's secession from Serbian-led federal Yugoslavia.

"This resolution strongly reaffirms our territorial integrity and sovereignty," Foreign Minister Mate Granic said.

"The U.N. protected areas (Serb-held lands) do not exist any more... this will stir (Krajina Serbs) towards negotiations on peaceful reintegration," he told reporters Saturday.

Croatia complained that the three-year-old U.N. presence was only perpetuating a stalemate exploited by separatist Serbs to cement their grip on a third of the country.

Zagreb also argued that the only mission, called the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR), was tilted to "protecting" a rogue minority rather than helping reunite a U.N. member state under legitimate government authority.

while white rightist groups want an Afrikaner homeland.

Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC secretary-general and chairman of the Constituent Assembly, said the nine provincial governments should be given powers of veto to override any legislation on health, housing, local government, education and other issues in exchange for boosting the scope of central government power.

"... This is not vindictive attempt to clip the wings of our provincial governments," Mr. Ramaphosa told delegates at the World Trade Centre meeting outside the airport town of Kempton Park where democracy talks began over five years ago to

end the apartheid era.

"Far from disempowering provincial governments this will substantially empower them within a framework of co-operative governance and not as a constellation of competing fiefdoms."

South Africa's interim constitution advocating more central government intervention in the provinces was completed in November 1993 and expires in 1999. The government wants the final constitution completed by June 1996.

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha says it will walk out of the Constitution Assembly on April 5 unless the ANC meets a pre-election pledge to bring in

foreign mediators to arbitrate on its demand for provincial autonomy in a federalist constitution.

The undertaking allowed Inkatha to enter last April's first all-race elections just days before voting started.

"I am deeply saddened by the disgrace to the dignity of the democratic institutions and the people of South Africa," Mr. Buthelezi said in a statement responding to the ANC's rejection of its ultimatum on mediation.

Mr. Ramaphosa said: "If we are going to take the Inkatha route, it is those provinces (federalism) who will not be able to support themselves economically... that will be political suicide."

Pakistani opposition says nuclear weapons vital

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan's main opposition party, accusing Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government of being soft on defence, said Saturday the country had to press ahead with its nuclear weapons programme to match India's.

The Pakistan Muslim (PML) said in a resolution

that the nation's nuclear programme was a deterrent to foreign aggression and necessary to counter rival India's "massive missile and nuclear proliferation."

The PML, led by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, adopted the resolution at a joint meeting Thursday of its Central Working Committee

and Parliamentary Party.

The resolution, released Saturday, came several days before Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was to leave for the United States, which has been pressing Pakistan to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), up for review this month.

The PML, accusing Ms.

Bhutto's government of failing to protect national security, said Pakistan should reject attempts to inspect its nuclear sites or "force a signature" of the NPT.

Pakistan has one nuclear power plant and is building a second one with the help of Chinese engineers and workers.

Japanese police close in tighter on cult

TOKYO (Agencies) — Police Saturday said they had found yet more possible links between an extremist religious sect and a nerve gas attack which killed ten people on Tokyo's subway, according to reports.

At facilities of the cult, police found a notebook which details production of sarin, the nerve gas used in the attack, according to the Nihon Keizai newspaper.

In raids on the sect's facilities, authorities have also turned up chemicals and complex equipment which can be used to make tons of sarin, enough, experts say, to kill millions of people.

The sect, the Aum Shinri Kyo, or Supreme Truth, denies involvement with the attack, or the shooting of the man leading the investigation into it. The head of the National Police Agency was recovering in serious condition Saturday.

Police have made no arrests in the subway attack or the shooting but have arrested members of the cult on other charges, such as carrying dangerous substances illegally.

In a further possible link between the cult and the subway attack, the Mainichi

newspaper Saturday quoted unnamed police sources as saying that an air purifier found in the automobile of a cult member had the same internal configuration as a similar device left at a central Tokyo subway station five days before the March 20 gassing.

The trains hit in the attack were all heading for that station.

The police reportedly said the two air purifiers were probably designed by the same person or group, and that they were pursuing the matter as they questioned the man arrested in Shiga prefecture, in western central Japan, three days after the attack who had one of the devices in his car.

Police would not confirm the reports.

Police were searching for 30 members the cult they want to question on suspicion of plotting mass murder, and asked regional police across the country to look for them, the daily Asahi Shimbun reported Saturday.

Quoting unnamed police sources, the Asahi said the 30 were thought to have been involved in preparing sarin. Police would neither confirm

nor deny the manhunt.

Tokyo police have said they are looking for the leader of the cult, longhaired, bearded guru Shoko Asahara, whose whereabouts are also unknown.

On Friday, police announced that they had found a computer list of members, many of whom were highly educated in the sciences, according to reports.

In its Saturday afternoon editions, the Asahi reported that police have narrowed their focus to a small group of highly trained chemists in the sect's "Science and Technology Ministry."

The masked 29-year-old man, identified as Akihiko Nishiohara, forced his way to the premier's car at a red light, police said.

The man, wearing a white mask, got out of a taxi at red lights and approached the prime minister's bullet-proof limousine. Politely saying "excuse me" three times, he banged the car and grabbed one of the car doors, police said.

Police over-powered and arrested Mr. Nishiohara, the Tokyo branch leader of a provincial rightist organisation, Dainihon Gokoku Shichishokai (The Great Japan Patriot Seven-Life Society).



French Prime Minister and presidential candidate Edouard Balladur holds a glass of white wine during a campaign tour in the southwestern town of Bordeaux (AFP photo)

Chirac presidency lead narrows — poll

PARIS (R) — Presidential frontrunner Jacques Chirac's popularity lead has narrowed in campaigning for France's April-May election to succeed President Francois Mitterrand, an opinion poll said Saturday.

The IFOP poll for several weeks including the weekly Le Journal Du Dimanche credited Paris Mayor Chirac, a conservative, with 24.5 per cent of the vote in the April 23 first round, down on a 28 per cent score a month ago.

Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin was stable in second place with 22 per cent, while Mr. Chirac's conservative rival Prime Minister Edouard Balladur edged up to 20.5 per cent from 19 per cent.

A third of those surveyed however said they might still change their minds.

Mr. Chirac's lead over possible rivals narrowed also in the second run-off vote on May 7. Mr. Chirac was shown beating Mr. Jospin by 57 per cent to 43 (against 59-41 a month ago) and Mr. Balladur 58-42 (against 64-36).

The IFOP survey was the latest in a series to reflect a narrowing of Mr. Chirac's lead over Mr. Balladur.

Mr. Balladur, the frontrunner until a Chirac surge two months ago, has adopted a more aggressive stance in an effort to catch up in the campaign's final weeks.

Mr. Mitterrand steps down next month after two seven-year terms as France's first Socialist head of state.

New Australian ministers presented

VIENNA (R) — Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, under fire over the country's budget, Saturday presented four new ministers as part of changes precipitated by the departure of Finance Minister Ferdinand Lacina.

Andreas Staribacher, 39, a chartered accountant who will become new finance minister, was presented to the media along with new ministers of interior, social and women's affairs.

Mr. Lacina, who held the post for nine years, quit after meeting opposition in his own party and the SPOE-dominated trade union to his deficit-trimming budget.

Sources close to the Finance Ministry said Mr. Lacina did not have the stomach for any more battles over the controversial restrictive budget.

The new ministers will be formally sworn in by President Thomas Klestil towards

the end of next week after the budget has been approved.

Mr. Vranitzky said he had decided to speed up changes to his four-month-old cabinet planned for later this year after Mr. Lacina resigned.

"We were criticised after Lacina's resignation and were a bit on the defensive," Mr. Vranitzky told journalists as he presented his new appointments. "So we decided to get out of the corner as soon as possible and this decision met the full approval of the party president."

Mr. Vranitzky, chairman of the Social Democrat Party (SPOE), the senior partner in Austria's ruling coalition, said his party colleagues had approved his proposals unanimously.

The budget, which Mr. Lacina presented to parliament earlier this month, calls for the deficit to be trimmed to 102.2 billion shillings (\$1.05 billion in 1995 from 104.8 billion (\$1.08 billion) in 1994).

Hard-won coalition agreement on the 1995 budget came after tough negotiations between the SPOE junior coalition partner, the Conservative People's Party (OEVP). Both had suffered heavy losses to the opposition in last October's general elections.

All the outgoing ministers will remain in office to present their chapters of the budget to parliament, Mr. Vranitzky said.

The new interior minister will be Caspar Einem, 46, a lawyer who is secretary of state for public works. He replaces Franz Loeschner, 40, a lawyer and a paid official of the Social Democrat Party (SPOE).

Homes collapse as strong quake hits Japan

TOKYO (AP) — Hundreds of buildings were damaged or destroyed and 36 people were injured Saturday in an earthquake in northwestern Japan. One woman, a 53-year-old tourist, was hospitalised after part of a historic mansion fell on her.

Three other people were seriously injured, officials said. Two had broken bones and another person's legs were severely burned when boiling water fell on them. Most victims were lightly injured with cooking burns or were hit on the head by falling objects.

There were no fires reported.

The quake, centered in the Japan Sea off the coast of Niigata City, 256 kilometres (160 miles) northwest of Tokyo, had a preliminary magnitude of 6.0.

Rescue workers pulled the tourist, whose name was not released, from the mansion's rubble soon after the quake. Her injuries were not believed to be severe, said a police official.

Eleven buildings were reported destroyed, and more than 440 others were damaged, police said. Four of the destroyed buildings were homes, and the others were

unoccupied schools and businesses, they said.

A quake of 6 is considered capable of causing widespread damage near the epicentre.

Some streets and sidewalks had cracks, and at some homes window glass was fractured or shattered.

One resident told NHK the quake made a sound of "bam bam bam" three or four times and then the ground started shaking from side to side.

The quake was the first measuring as high as a 6 magnitude in Niigata since a 1964 quake of 7.5 there killed 26 people and damaged

thousands of buildings.

Authorities at first said the quake measured 4 on the Japanese scale of 7 but later said it could have been as high as 5 in certain areas.

The quake, which hit in the early afternoon, was felt as a faint rumble in Tokyo.

The earthquake that devastated western Japan on Jan. 17 had a magnitude 7.2 and measured the top level of 7 on the Japanese scale in some parts of the port city of Kobe. It killed 5,300 people.

Saturday's earthquake was not felt in Kobe, about 500 kilometres (300 miles) from Niigata.

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Delivering on external front

WHEN THE government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker was formed three months ago, it was hailed as the government of change. The government was supposed to adopt new policies that would prepare the Kingdom to effectively deal with the major changes that have taken place in the country and in the region. On the local level, much had to be done. So was the case in the regional and international arenas.

Almost three months after the new government was sworn in, it is still not possible to scientifically assess its performance on the domestic front. It is noticeable that the government is under less fire from the opposition than its predecessor; it is clear that less people are criticising its approach in dealing with the democratic process and Parliament. However, these indicators on their own cannot be reliable in assessing the performance of the government. Little information is available on the economic situation in the Kingdom. Parliament is in recess, and the focus for the last few months has been on foreign policy. And it is in the foreign policy domain that the government seems to be doing a good job.

After the signing of the peace treaty with Israel, opposition at home and detractors abroad accused the government of having opted to move closer to Israel and the United States at the expense of its ties with other Arab countries. They accused it of compromising on Jordan's rights and of having given up the pursuit of a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The new government has proved these accusations false. A week after it assumed office, its first foreign policy success was improving ties with Egypt. A few days after Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti flew to Cairo and met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian leader paid his first visit to the Kingdom since the Gulf crisis erupted in 1990. Relations with Egypt have continued to get better since then.

So have relations with Gulf Arab countries. Jordanian officials toured several of these countries, and many Gulf officials visited the Kingdom and signed agreements of cooperation in various fields.

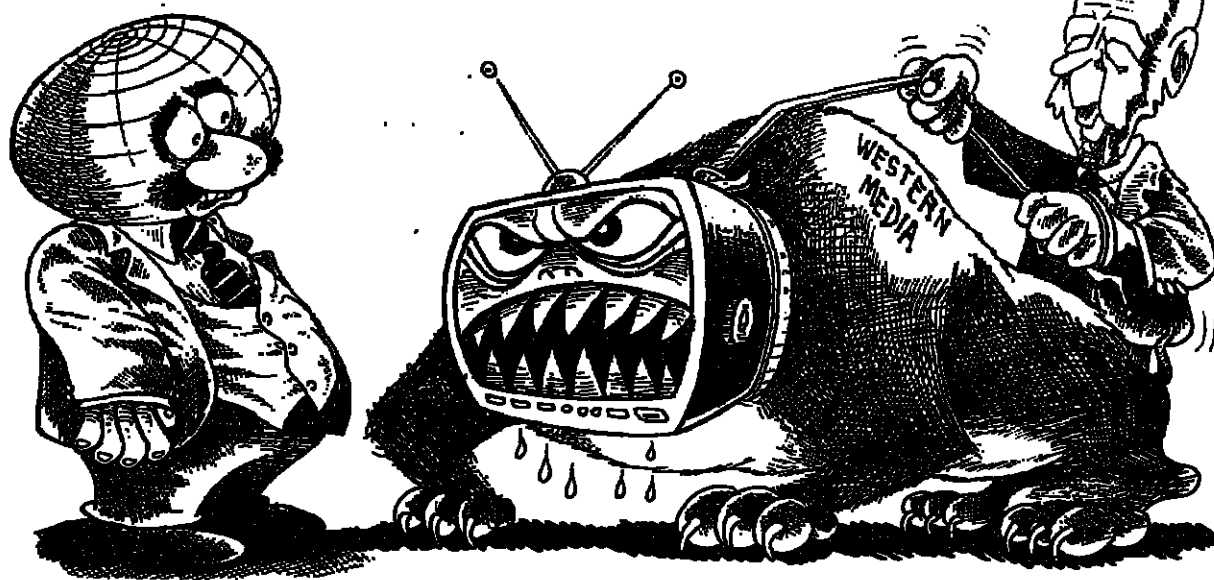
In its policy statement, the government pledged to work hard to end differences among Arab states. And since then it has been working hard to fulfill this pledge. As far as relations with Israel are concerned, the government remains committed to delivering on the obligation it undertook in the peace treaty with Israel. However, the government is standing firm against Israeli policies that are still based on the aggressive and uncompromising ideals of Zionism. The Kingdom's position on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a case in point. Jordan has told Israel it was cheating when it says it will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the area, when in fact it already had. Jordan, the first country downwind from Israel, therefore, supports Egypt's position that calls for subjecting Israeli nuclear installations to international inspection. Jordan also wants a peace that is just and that is lasting and that is comprehensive. While Israel talks about an "Israeli peace," Jordan is pursuing the peace that will bring benefits to the people of the whole region, the peace the man in the street will support and the peace that will cover all Arab-Israeli fronts.

The vibrancy of this government in pursuing and redefining the Kingdom's foreign policy goals has produced many positive results. If the same dynamism is exercised in addressing the Kingdom's domestic concerns, the government will be able to bring about the change that has been promised for a long time, but has been slow, very slow, in coming.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily on Monday praised His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as 30 years passed since he was named Crown Prince. The paper said the Jordanian people have over the past three decades known Prince Hassan as an energetic man who saves no effort in serving the homeland and the King. It said Prince Hassan was deriving his energy from his Hashemite ancestors who raised the banner of Islam to humanity all over the world and from the heritage of the Great Arab Revolt, led by the Hashemite Sharif Al Hussein Ben Ali, who raised the banner of Arab unity and liberation. Prince Hassan today represents the fourth Hashemite generation this century, it said, noting that he represents in his life and achievements the Arab-Islamic history and the outcome of the struggle of the Hashemite family in the 20th century. It said Prince Hassan on Friday, as he returned home from a European tour, summarised national plans for the current year and dealt with means of enhancing regional stability and cooperation between the countries of the Middle East as well as achieving Arab reconciliation. It said he was clear and very capable of defining the immediate work that has to be done on the national and regional levels.

M. KAHIL



Democracy: a precondition for Palestinian survival

By Mustafa Barghuthi

NOBODY TODAY questions the absolute need for a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. There is, however, a growing awareness that the current peace process fails to meet the needs of the Palestinian people for a just, durable and lasting peace. Even among those who signed the

Gaza-Jericho agreement, few are prepared to defend it. The restrictions the agreement imposes on Palestinian autonomy will prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state and undermine foundations for peace. Indeed, the agreement is already shown to be imposing conditions that will lead to greater destabilisation in the area. Furthermore, the Israeli strategy of exploiting the inherent weaknesses of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for short-term political advantage, as they did during the Oslo and Cairo negotiations, will threaten any possible peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestine conflict.

Threats to stability

The deep flaws in the Gaza-Jericho agreement can be traced to the subordination of Palestinian needs for self-determination to Israeli security needs. Four problems stand out as major threats to future stability. First, dialogue about the future of Jerusalem has been postponed for three years, while each day the Israelis take steps to deepen the separation of East Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied territories with a view to consolidating the city's illegal annexation. Existing Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem are being expanded and new settlements are being built. Meanwhile, the Israeli government is preventing any Palestinian institutions from organising meetings in East Jerusalem and restricting economic support from the European Union (EU) and other international bodies to Gaza and Jericho. By excluding Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank, where many vital Palestinian institutions are located, from much needed development assistance, the Israelis are attempting to erode Palestinian autonomy.

Second, the issue of Israeli settlements is unresolved. Direct discussion of this issue has been postponed, yet each day settlements throughout the territories are being expanded. It is evident that through their settlement activities and Jerusalem policy, the Israelis are creating new facts on the ground while preventing Palestinians from doing so. Israel's actions cast doubt on the viability of a future Palestinian state. But the lack of resistance to such measures by the Palestinian authority also casts doubt on its ability to safeguard Palestinians' interests.

Third, and contrary to the perspective of many people outside the occupied territories, the degree of Palestinian autonomy guaranteed in the Gaza-Jericho agreement is limited. The Israeli government remains in control of 94 per cent of the territories, including at least 40 per

cent of the territory of Gaza. It has also retained the right to veto Palestinian legislation, which requires Israeli approval before it can become law. Moreover, Israeli control of Palestinian life in the autonomous areas remains extensive. All borders remain firmly under Israeli control. Even in civil areas such as health and education, Palestinian authority is restricted. For example, the agreement regarding the transfer of health administration obliges Palestinian health professionals to notify the Israeli authorities if any injured person is admitted to hospital and prevents Palestinians from carrying out post mortem examinations.

Finally, the Jericho agreement has established a dangerous precedent for future negotiations on the status of the West Bank. Palestinian authority is restricted to the populated areas of Jericho town and the neighbouring village of Al Auja, while the road between these two areas remains under Israeli control. In the future, the Palestinian authority may find itself with jurisdiction only over population, rather than land or natural resources. This is inconsistent with the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity upon which statehood rests.

The leadership's missed opportunities

These are just some of the problems with this agreement. Many more could be listed. However, the central question which emerges is whether Palestinian negotiators could have achieved a better agreement if they had used the strength and support of the Palestinian people. It was, after all, the resistance of ordinary people during the intifada that initiated the political process that led to the negotiating table. Coordination with other Arab countries would also have helped strengthen the Palestinian hand. Even given the failure to exploit these strengths, many other opportunities were clearly missed. For example, during the fifth round of negotiations, the Israelis offered to withdraw from Gaza, including the removal of all Israeli settlements within its territory.

Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that many people have lost hope and are unable to see ways to improve the situation. Reversing this descent into pessimism is vital. But while there is room for change, there is also a need for realism and a clear strategy for achieving a better state of affairs. If the agreements are to be improved and the mistakes committed by the Palestinian negotiators rectified two things are vital. First, systems of true accountability must be established, giving an effective voice to the people. Second, the mistakes of the past — such as the policy failures in Lebanon and Jordan — must be learnt from; and the opportunities of the present must be grasped. The positive factors that serve the Palestinian interest can still be utilised, but this will not be the case forever. With every new agreement between Israel and Arab countries, it will become increasingly diffi-

cult for Palestinians to insist on their national and human rights.

Real accountability requires effective political representation. My central concern in this area is that the signing of the unjust and restrictive Gaza-Jericho agreement has undermined that representation. Before signing there was a sense of national unity which was enhanced greatly during the intifada. However, the agreement has become a source of division among the people, who are forced to take a position either for or against it. This is creating a polarisation in society which will obstruct the achievement of national goals. There is a sense that we need to restore our common political identity and aspirations. The role of the PLO, as a body that should reflect the common national goals of the people, has been severely harmed by the decision of its leadership, or parts of it, to appoint itself as a self-governing authority. The drift towards autocracy has undermined the claim of the PLO leadership to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Gaza-Jericho agreement itself, which, paradoxically, has not been ratified by any legitimate Palestinian body or PLO structure. This undermines the inherent tensions between the different roles the PLO leadership is now attempting to play. On the one hand, the terms of the agreement reflect Israeli efforts to coopt the PLO into overseeing a new political entity designed to safeguard Israeli interests and aspirations of the Palestinian people. It is impossible to play both of these roles at the same time. The PLO cannot both defend the content of this agreement and lead the struggle against the injustice it embodies.

This conflict of roles becomes evident whenever the Palestinian community raises concerns about prisoners, settlements and the closure of borders. The normal response from the Palestine National Authority (PNA) is an assurance that the issue will be taken to the Israelis. Surely the Palestinian leadership should be organising the struggle for people's rights, instead of submissively attending endless rounds of "high level" meetings which produce little in the way of tangible results. If the authority continues to act in this way, the Israelis will have successfully transformed the Palestinian leadership into its mediator between the occupier and the occupied.

The need for accountable leadership

Whether one is for or against the agreement, attention should now be focused on organising the relationship between the Palestinian authority and the people. Contrary to the view of the Palestinian leadership, the democratisation of Palestinian society will be increased by the development and promotion of the infrastructure of resistance. This is especially true of the non-governmental sector, which has a vital role to play in

protesting about the worsening daily situation. But since the agreement many NGOs have come to the point of financial collapse as resources are diverted to the PNA. Since September 1993, for example, 53 per cent of NGO health clinics have closed. The PNA should treat the NGO sector as an ally in building civil society. Instead it is marginalising it. This reflects a wider tendency towards totalitarianism in the Palestinian authority — a tendency to the authority to control all aspects of Palestinian life.

In summary, while we are witnessing the emergence of a Palestinian authority over a small part of Palestinian territory, the realities of Israeli occupation remain. The most effective way of changing this reality is not through "top-down" politics, where authority passes to a small elite, but through democratisation. In other words, Palestinians need to be empowered so that they can influence the political changes happening around them.

A precondition for empowerment is the organisation of democratic legislative elections in the occupied territories, yet the Gaza-Jericho agreement allows only for the possibility of the election of a small executive body with limited legislative powers. This restriction pre-empts comprehensive general elections in three ways: by not allowing Palestinians to elect representatives to negotiate on their behalf as legitimate, democratically elected leaders; by not allowing the separation of legislative, executive and judiciary powers; and, perhaps most seriously, by the exclusion of people from the process of peace and development.

Unless the obstacles to legislative elections are overcome, it is hard to see how the mounting political and economic crises in the territories will be resolved. Without a democratically elected body responsible for legislation, it is impossible to expect suitable agencies to develop that can support economic growth. In short, without democratic elections it is impossible to meet Palestinian aspirations for representative and effective institutions. Given the problems that the PLO has experienced, it is clear that the success of future negotiations about the final status of the territories, including complex issues like Jerusalem, depends on having democratically elected representatives.

After more than 70 years of Palestinian suffering and failures, the absence of democracy and people's participation continues. Today, it is not only one of the main barriers to ending the prolonged suffering, it is the main obstacle to achieving a more promising future. Democracy is no longer a luxury, it is an absolute precondition for the very survival of the Palestinian nation.

Mustafa Barghuthi is president of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees and a former member of the Palestinian delegation.

The article is reprinted from Middle East International.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Press fails to respond to realities of new times

SINCE JORDAN embarked on its democratic programme in 1989, the Jordanian press enjoyed a reasonable margin of freedom of expression. It gained the ability to criticise officials and expose corruption without fear. However, it did not try to maximise and expand its role and use the new found freedom to the limit, and utilise all the available space it was given.

Part of this failure was due to the unnecessary continuation of the old practices and mentality of journalists and editors, which needs time and pioneers to change.

As far as the national economy is concerned, the press coverage may be adequate in quantity but not in quality. Most of the economic and business stories which appear in the Jordanian press is too dependent on the international media. Sometimes, even the local developments and trends in Amman stock exchange are quoted from Reuters, the Associated Press, or other agencies. The contents of the economic pages are dominated by international news. Not because our press is that internationally-minded, but due to lack of material.

Few economists, if any, write regularly in the Jordanian press. Most others are part-time contributors. It is no wonder that Jordanian newspapers frequently commit gross and obvious mistakes based on misunderstanding, especially when using titles that do not convey the real meaning of the texts concerned.

The Jordanian press still lacks the full-fledged reportage. Investigative journalism is almost non-existent. Newspapers, it seems, can't afford training their editorial staff, or the time and cost needed for assigning journalists for sophisticated stories on public affairs and events.

Dealing with corruption, real or imaginary, has a place in the Jordanian print media. However, the serious daily newspapers try to avoid the tricky subject, due to insufficient evidence, and they try to rid themselves of legal and tribal troubles. The weeklies, on the other hand, welcome such stories, even if they were based on mere rumours, to help circulation and popularity. No serious investigation is normally conducted, and the editor may not bother to give the accused a chance to comment. The result is too many charges and too little credibility.

Corruption is being dealt with in two extreme ways, either reckless publication conducted by the sensational weekly and partisan newspapers, or playing it safe by giving corruption blind eye by the daily newspapers.

Jordanian public opinion is usually inclined to take corruption accusations on their face value, without demanding a proof. People tend to accept corruption charges as true until they are proved untrue.

Due to certain cultural and historical background, the Jordanian public is against corruption but not sufficiently against the corrupt. A corrupt official is sometimes perceived as a strong and daring official. The going word is not theft but benefit. The reason behind this strange attitude is four centuries of Ottoman rule, when the financial relationship between the rulers and the people was simply mutual cheating.

Of course the new democratic atmosphere is not conducive to corruption. Corruption is no more protected by silence. The free press can expose the corrupt. However, the infant democracy, lack of experience, hesitation of the serious press in fighting corruption, or the too hasty and unsubstantiated accusations of the weeklies render the press less effective, and sometimes easy target for the suspect instead of the other way around.

Corruption in this context is not only about receiving bribes. It is also about mismanagement, favouritism and the wasting of public time and resources.

LETTERS

Embassies in need of well-mannered staff

To the Editor:

IN THE last few months, I was one of those fortunate citizens who had the chance to travel to Europe. But each time I had to get a visa to my destination without naming any particular embassy, I would like to ask those embassies to treat us Jordanians as we treat them. I am not asking them to give us a visa at their respective airports as we do to the nationals of their countries. I am merely asking them to respect us, respect our time, stop harassing us with unnecessary requests, such as information about the amount of money we are taking, and the deeds of our properties.

I am sure if our embassies treat European citizens in the same way when they try to obtain visas to come to Jordan, the issue will be publicised worldwide in every newspaper. It would qualify Jordan as anti human or God knows what?

I sincerely hope that those embassies change their way of treatment by appointing and increasing the number of well-qualified and well-mannered staff who can say no in a nice way.

(Name withheld upon request)

No to cabinet reshuffle

To the Editor:

I HAVE had the opportunity to work closely with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for several years through the Madaba Mosaic School technical cooperation project between the Italian and Jordanian governments. During this time I have seen several ministers come and go due to changes and shifts in the cabinet. Now we are hearing rumours of yet another change in government. Even though these changes may be warranted, the frequency with which they happen have a negative effect on long range planning and continuity.

Every minister appointed tends to see things from a different perspective and has different priorities. From experience, I have noticed that at the point when the new minister begins to understand the various programmes and projects, he/she is changed and we have to start all over again. I believe that this can only affect negatively the development process of Jordan.

What instigated my desire to write this letter is that when I heard that the Cabinet might be changing, the first thing that came to mind is that they might change the current minister of tourism and antiquities. Therefore, I decided that before this new Cabinet change I wanted to take a personal initiative and make my views known.

The current minister of tourism has respectable work ethics and truly takes the time to investigate and make changes. It makes me proud that a person at his level is willing to come before all employees arrive and leave after all employees have been home for several hours. Moreover, he has sincerely tried to help solve some of the institutionalised problems which not only this ministry but all ministries suffer from. I would really hate to see him changed. His case, I believe, is that of one person whose presence can really make a difference.

Dr. Aida Dabbas, Amman.

Features

Kabariti: The Israelis are cheating when they say 'we will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the area' 'It has been our policy to demand that the Israeli nuclear facilities be under international inspection'

FOLLOWING IS the full text of the interview that Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti gave to the Jerusalem Post last week. The interview was published Friday.

The big issue during King Hussein's visit here this week was the \$275-million allocation for Jordanian debt relief, which Congress has not yet signed off on. How do you view progress toward its approval?

I am very satisfied with the way it's being handled right now. We had the impression that we were caught in the middle of a partisan feud between the Republicans and the Democrats, and our debt-relief programme was about to be the victim of this dispute.

However, I think things have been sorted out with the Congress and the administration, and (Tuesday) we were given the impression that the debt relief will be done in a way that will be very satisfactory for both (sides), Jordan and the Congress... But the full amount will be granted. Has Congress not been forthcoming on President Clinton's pledge to King Hussein to wipe out the debt, or was it a misunderstanding between the two branches?

This is exactly the word that they use, that there has been some kind of misunderstanding between Congress and the administration. And (on Capitol Hill) they denied the accusations that were (made) against them that they were insensitive to Jordanian needs and to the significance and importance of debt relief to Jordan.

How important an issue is this to Jordan?

Symbolically, the administration, being a partner in peacekeeping, should... really deliver on these promises or understandings for the peace process to continue, because we feel Jordan could be an example, a model that could induce others or could in fact make it hard for them to take the risks, or if I may be picky in my words, take the leap to make peace.

Are you referring to the benefits Syria may be seeking? I'm not talking only materially. I'm talking about the commitment of the international community of showing the interest not only of signing the treaties and letting go but also in keeping the peace and building it to have really something to endure.

King Hussein stressed the need to bring home the benefits of peace to the "person in the street." Has the average Jordanian enjoyed the benefits yet?

Definitely not yet. There are high expectations, high hopes, as you may call it, (for) the fruits of peace. For the Jordanian public, it was taken for granted that once the government signed the peace treaty with the Israelis, things would be much better and would reflect positively for their well-being.

As time passes, they feel nothing has materialised. Talking about only debt relief and mega-projects, something like the Jordan Rift Valley projects, doesn't really relate to their well-being

and their expectations.

The questions are pending as far as how much peace will contribute to alleviating the daily pressures, the daily job opportunities, lowering the poverty levels in Jordan and improving the standard of living... We need to know that the international community is really forthcoming...

How do you evaluate Israeli-Jordanian relations in the five months since the treaty was signed?

Again, we will have to differentiate and distinguish between the official commitment and the popular feeling toward that peace treaty. Officially, on the government side, definitely we were fully committed and we are negotiating in good faith and in earnest to implement fully all the agreements that came with the treaty.

Now if we are to talk about the general mood, the general feeling toward the peace treaty, I guess there is that large chunk of public opinion who supported the peace treaty on the basis of wait and see. And this portion, of the population are the people who are now leaning toward taking away their support.

The support for the peace treaty is slipping away from among this group of people because they think it did not really bring with it the expectations and the dividends they were expecting. How much of a concern is that to you?

I'm very much concerned, because in the final analysis, for peace to be durable and sustained, the popular support is very much needed. Next month the international community will meet in New

York about extending the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. What is Jordan's position on the extension?

We are the country that has the longest border with Israel, and your nuclear facilities — if I may use the expression, the most notorious one, in Dimona — is very close, it's only 20 miles (32 kilometres) away from a Jordanian city, Tafilah. Especially when you talk about a quote-unquote Chernobyl-like incident, any kind of leakage or proliferation will definitely affect us environmentally and threaten the well-being and the health of the area.

So it's been our policy to demand that the Israeli nuclear facility should be under close international inspection, maybe by the International Atomic Energy Agency. And that's why we are very much for the NPT agreement, very much for its objectives.

Does that mean that you have decided that you will sign the extension?

We haven't decided yet, to tell you the truth. We've been discussing this issue with the Arab countries and the non-aligned countries. Last week's Arab League resolution in Cairo seemed to leave some room for a resolution.

Room was there... (The conflict) somehow brought into the picture the idea of Israel as wanting detente rather than peace in the area — detente in the sense of being engaged diplomatically with all the Arab countries, backed by an overwhelming force and exercising supremacy and exercising

lordship rather than partnership. What about Egypt's role in pressing the issue?

I find the Egyptian position very accommodating and forthcoming... They are for the objectives of the treaty, but they want to know, also, how and when Israel could also be part of that treaty to give the sense that the area will not come under any Israeli nuclear umbrella that we all reject.

How much of a problem for Jordan has the Syrian opposition to the treaty with Israel been?

It is a problem in the sense that we in Jordan would like to maintain a special and privileged relationship with Syria...

(But) we felt immediately after the Oslo agreement that if we are to wait any longer, then the best interest of Jordan would really be served... I think that the Syrians are committed to peace. Once the Israelis make it clear that they are willing to make peace with Syria based on all the land for all the peace, I think the Syrians will go along.

How do Egyptian-Jordanian relations stand after Cairo complained it was bypassed in your agreement with Israel?

Our relationship with Egypt is very strong, and cooperation and coordination are at a very good level. We feel that the Egyptian role in the area and in the furthering of the cause of peace has been earned by the Egyptians by the fact that they are the largest country, they were the first to sign a peace treaty with Israel and they have always been a moderating in-

fluence in the area in the last 20 years or so.

What about your relations with Saudi Arabia, which took a hit since Jordan supported Iraq in the Gulf War?

There's not much that could be said right now. It's normal. Our ambassador has taken up his post in Riyadh. We are very keen to improve the relations and will not spare any effort to better the relationship with the Saudis.

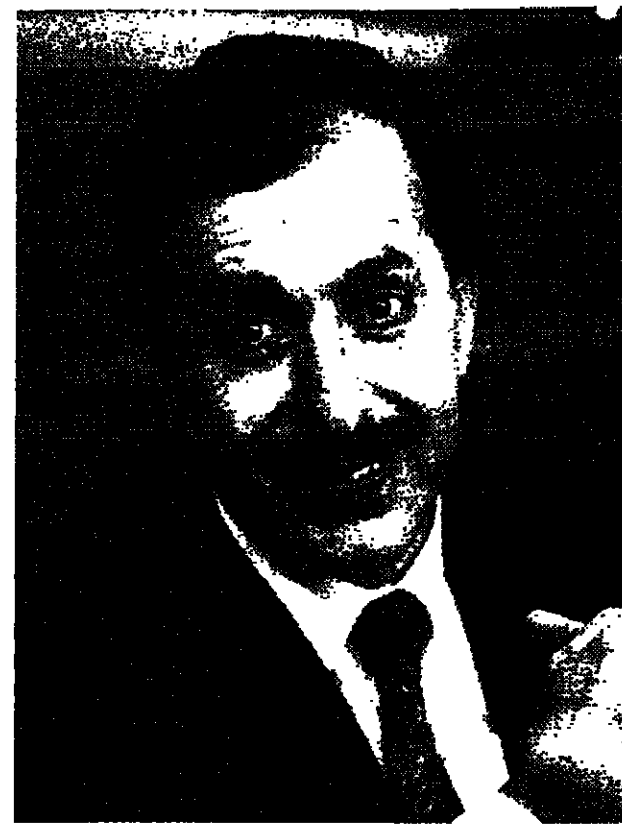
Shimon Peres has stated that Israel would consider joining the NPT only after it reaches a comprehensive peace that includes Iran, Iraq and Libya.

I have discussed this with Mr. Peres when he brought up the subject. You cannot manufacture a monster for you to be able to have a role in the area. And if we are to keep pumping up the Iranian threat out of proportion, then we will be playing with fire. In the final analysis, the Iranian nuclear facilities are under international inspection, and they are a member of the treaty.

Maybe that could be a good reason for the Israelis to join, to allay the fears of the people of the area — and if they want to cheat, this is up to them to do it if they feel that the Iranians are cheating.

Israel maintains that is exactly the flaw in the NPT, because Iran is a signatory yet can acquire nuclear components legally.

I personally think also that the Israelis are cheating when they say 'We will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the area' — which means they do



Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti: We need to know that the international community is really forthcoming

have the capability. I feel that apparently the Israelis do have it and do intend to use it as a deterrent in the area and use it also as a way to exercise their supremacy...

We are very much for good neighbourly relations with the Israelis, we are very much for having them as partners for the development of the area. And again, it seems to me whenever the Israelis talk about peace, they talk about Israeli peace, and when we talk about peace we talk about comprehensive, just, durable peace. What is your vision of a Middle East at peace?

This perception of seeing Israel as greedy, that they want everything and they don't want to give anything, should be addressed in a way that the people of the area — and I'm not talking about the Jordanian people, I'm talking about the Arab side in general — should feel that the Israelis do really have an interest to live in the area as part of the area, not as a threatened group of people who will have to maintain some kind of super capability for them to be able to exercise supremacy over the Arab countries.

Israel threatens 'action'

(Continued from page 1)

funeral of a Hizbollah fighter who died on Saturday of wounds sustained in fierce duels a day earlier between the militants and Israeli forces.

On Saturday, a tentative calm held across South Lebanon, although Israeli gunners fired a few artillery rounds into Iqlim Al Tufah, a Hizbollah mountain bastion just north of Israel's occupation zone in South Lebanon, in the early morning.

No casualties were reported in the shelling. Eight Lebanese civilians were wounded by Friday's Israeli bombardment. Security sources said the guerrilla who died on Saturday was one of five Hizbollah men wounded as a result of Israeli air raids and pounding of Iqlim Al Tufah.

Israeli helicopter fighters killed Hizbollah guerrilla leader Yassin by rocketing his car in South Lebanon.

The latest flareup on the Israeli-Lebanese frontier threatened the fragile peace negotiations between Israel and Syria that resumed earlier this month after intense U.S. intervention.

Israel argues that Syria, as the power broker in Lebanon, could easily rein in Hizbollah, but chooses not to because it wants to use tension at the frontier as a tool to pressure Israel in the peace

talks.

"The prime minister said today that it is in the hands of the Syrians," said Mr. Rabin's spokesman Oded Ben-Ami, characterising the remark as an accusation.

"If they wanted to prevent the actions by Hizbollah, they could do it."

Mr. Rabin toured Kiryat Shmona where a four-storey apartment building whose windows and pipes were blown out by the blast of a Katyusha that landed nearby. Six people were hurt by the rocket.

Israel's ambassador to Washington, Itamar Rabinovich, said the latest violence would influence Israel's stance in the peace talks.

Mr. Rabinovich suggested that if Syria was unable to stick to the 1993 understanding, then it might also not honour a future peace treaty.

"We are measuring and testing Syria's ability to keep agreements and understandings also by means of what is going on in Lebanon," Mr. Rabinovich told Israel Radio.

Mr. Rabinovich rejected Syrian claims that the violence was strictly a matter between Israel and Lebanon.

"Syria is definitely a partner to this understanding and definitely has shown ability, not just in words, to do things in Lebanon," he said. "Therefore, our expectations regarding this are directed first and foremost toward Syria."

'2,800 killed in Algeria'

(Continued from page 1)

Anwar Haddam, FI's representative to Washington, told an Arab and Islamic conference the proposals, put forward by Algerian opposition groups in Rome in January, had to be the starting point for dialogue.

"If they want a peaceful solution there is the Rome accord, otherwise the jihad (holy struggle) will continue to set up an Islamic state," said Mr. Haddam. The accord offered conditional negotiations with Algeria to lead to a transitional government to take the country to elections.

"We will not accept any compromise on our religion," Mr. Haddam said. "We are not responsible for the killing of innocents because we are the ones who called for a halt in the killings."

The APS report, quoting L'Authentique, said: "Sources close to the author-

ities said important information related to the serious setbacks suffered these last days by terrorists would be published soon."

APS quoted the newspaper as saying the army had scored successes east of Algiers in Bir Al Ater, Souk Ahras and Jijel, at Laghouat south of the capital and in coastal Kolea as well as in 'Ain Defla to the southwest.

"The 'Ain Defla operation... was only one of four or five combined major operations... to curtail the most active terrorist pockets and hotbeds," the paper was quoted as saying.

"In the eastern region, the terrorist hotbeds have been practically wiped out, leaving only small gangs," the newspaper said. "The GIA is decapitated."

Liberte said troops had also captured 200 of the rebels who are trying to overthrow the government.

Abed Rabbo assails Israel

(Continued from page 1)

forces were charged with security only in the autonomous areas. "Regions outside are not the Palestinians' responsibility," he said.

The Israeli army arrested four Palestinians on Saturday at an army roadblock between Jerusalem and Bethlehem during a peaceful sit-in protesting against a closure that bars Palestinians from Israel.

Witnesses said the army tried to disperse around 200 protesters carrying Palestinian flags and banners that called for the lifting of the closure and for the evacuation of Jewish settlements from Hebron.

"They army did not use bullets, but as they tried to disperse protesters, they arrested four women and men," a Palestinian witness said. One of those protesters was later released.

Hundreds of Palestinians and leftist Israelis staged protest sit-ins all around the West Bank at army roadblocks set up at the entrance of Palestinian towns and villages to ban entry to Israel of West Bank and Gaza residents.

"The closure has been in effect for almost a year, but has been strictly observed since January. Israel has severely limited the passage of West Bank and Gaza workers and cargo into the Jewish state in response to suicide attacks by groups opposed to the peace process."

Tens of thousands of Arab workers have been denied entry.

U.N. special coordinator Terje Larsen said last week that Palestinians have lost more than \$600 million in the 300 days in which the closure was in effect.

He said the losses exceeded what donors would provide.

An Israeli official said hundreds of Israeli settlers are

illegally squatting in empty houses on the occupied West Bank.

Some 156 settlers have taken over empty homes built with public funds, while 300 others have occupied houses they have purchased without first obtaining the necessary permits, Eytan Kabel told Israel Radio.

Mr. Kabel, an advisor to Housing Minister Ben Eliezer, said: "The figures don't at all give the true picture of the phenomenon which could be much larger," adding that there were about 3,000 empty houses on the West Bank.

"We send inspectors to the area from time to time, but for financial reasons we can't provide a permanent control to stop these illegal actions."

A settlers' leader, Pinhas Wallerstein, said the squatters were aided by settlers councils.

"There is no reason why people should live in dirty caravans when there are buildings left empty by the government for political reasons," he said.

Settlers councils distribute the buildings illegally and hook them up to the electricity and water networks as well as the sewerage system.

"It is not up to the Palestinians to tell us where we can live" on the West Bank, said an Israeli woman, Tzvia Zargani, who is living in one of the houses in the Maale Nevona settlement.

But the Peace Now movement on Saturday issued a statement calling for the settlers to be evicted immediately and legal action to be taken against settlers organisations helping them.

The Israeli government has officially frozen building work in West Bank settlements, except for around Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley.

Opposition parties slam Turkish move

(Continued from page 12)

cratic Progressive Party, the Constitutional Arab Jordanian Front Party, and the Jordanian Socialist Arab Baath Party.

Also on Saturday, the Islamic Action Front sent a letter to the speaker of the Lower House of Parliament asking him to convene an unofficial session of the legislature to discuss the situation of Iraq.

In the statement, which was made available to the Jordan Times, Hamzeh Mansour,

the IAF spokesman, said IAF deputies request an unofficial session to discuss the report of Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission in charge of eliminating Iraq's mass destruction weapons, and "American fabrications aimed at prolonging the embargo on Iraq."

The IAF statement said the House should rise up to its "responsibilities vis-a-vis a Muslim Arab neighbouring country which is suffering from the longest embargo in history."

Spies who sleep in the cold

Shyam Bhatia in Jerusalem reports on the 25,000 Palestinian collaborators cast out by their families and abandoned by the Israelis. They are now seeking a home of their own.

EVERY EVENING as the dew falls over Jerusalem, Omar Suwaidi and his band of self-confessed quislings bring out their bottles of alcohol and dream of a new settlement for an emerging class of homeless Palestinians.

They live in Independence Park, a 10-minute drive from the office of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Their beds are park benches and morning ablutions are performed in a nearby cave Mr. Suwaidi and his friends, cast out by their families, belong to a brotherhood of Palestinian collaborators, estimated at more than 25,000, who were recruited by the Israelis after the 1967 Middle East war.

Local police, indifferent to the services they have given the Jewish state, often arrest them for vagrancy and hold them overnight in a cell where they get a hot meal, a mattress and a blanket. The next morning they resume their begging along Jaffa Street and outside some of the city's better-known restaurants.

"I used to be the number one collaborator in East Jerusalem when I worked for the Israeli authorities," says Mr. Suwaidi, 40. "My main job was to spy on my community. I started working for the secret police at the age of 17, but now they don't need me and they have thrown me to the dogs."

He was released only weeks ago from prison where he served his latest two-year term for theft. Before he was sentenced in a Jerusalem court, the magistrate reprimanded the authorities for not finding a solution to keep Mr. Suwaidi and his comrades off the streets.

"These people have risked their lives to say Jews," the magistrate wrote after hearing Mr. Suwaidi's plea of mitigation. "The government has a moral re-

sponsibility not to turn its back on them. Sending them to prison is not the solution, rather it is up to the government to find them jobs and homes."

The collaborators' predicament first surfaced in 1988 after the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada. In the occupied territories the identities of many were never a secret; they were the ones with luxury cars, extra telephone lines and a licence to carry weapons. As PLO activists began to target them, Israel moved some known collaborators and their families to the fortified transit camps of Fahmei and Dahniyeh where they lived under army protection. From there the lucky ones are routinely moved to safe homes in Israel.

Now they are the untouchables. Since then, more than 800 have been killed. The first and last killed were disposed of in the West Bank town of Jenin, which Israel has offered to hand over to PLO leader Yasser Arafat's government in the next phase of extending autonomy to the Palestinians.

Israeli officials insist that less than 10 per cent of those killed were on the payroll of the notorious Shabak. The others, they claim, were the victims of personal vendettas and included junkies, petty thieves and prostitutes.

Mr. Rabin's military advisers are more than happy to show photographs of the grisly executions, including deaths by hanging, garroting, hacking and burning. They believe this is evidence that the Palestinians are not ready to be admitted into the world of civilised nations.

But most collaborators and their families say the onus of responsibility for their welfare rests with the Defence Ministry, which failed to guarantee their personal safety and later abandoned them. Some

have demonstrated outside the Israeli parliament; others are threatening to sue the government for compensation.

"Last week I telephoned my former 'control' and told him that if I was not given \$40,000 as compensation, I would take my case to court," says Abdullah Hasan, 29. Known among his contemporaries as "gold chains" Abdullah — because of his fondness for expensive medallions — he fled the West Bank town of Tulikarm after Hamas Islamic activists set fire to his home and shot and injured three of his brothers.

As a temporary remedy, Shabak has found him a small apartment across the green line in the Israeli Arab city of Tira. Before his cover was blown, Mr. Hasan ran a successful black-smith's foundry that earned him the equivalent of \$3,000 a month. The Israeli government has given him \$2,000 to buy furniture and the Defence Ministry pays his rent of \$100 a month.

"They have feasted on my flesh and now they want to dispose of my skeleton," says Mr. Hasan. "If I had my time over again, I would never work for them."

He also has to contend with the hatred of his new Israeli-Arab neighbours who have launched a campaign to cleanse their community of "traitors." Less than 100 yards from his mock Spanish home, Mr. Hasan's neighbours watch his comings and goings with undiluted hatred.

"They are all disgusting, they stole two of my sheep and one of my neighbours has told me she suspects them of stealing \$10,000," complains Um Yusuf as she guts a chicken. "Why should we like them when they do this to us. They are not straightforward people." She has a simple proposition: "Send them back to their original villages where they will be shot."

The ugly mood in Tira, home to 17,000 Israeli-Arabs, is the predictable outcome of the Defence Ministry's clumsy efforts to resettle some collaborators and their families inside Israel. The campaign against them climaxed in Nazareth, where the Arab-run municipality called on the one million-strong Arab community to resist the ministry's schemes earlier this month.

The mayor of Nazareth, Ramez Jarayseh, who has called for the forced expulsion of collaborators from Israeli-Arab communities, was summoned for questioning by police after some collaborators were attacked. But the police took no action against the mayor of Tel Aviv, former Police Minister Ronnie Milo, who has vowed to cut municipal services to any collaborators resettled in his city.

In Tira, families have matched Nazareth by setting up the Committee for Expelling Spies. "We refuse to be used as a shield for protecting these low collaborators from the anger of their people and the families of their victims," it announced last week.

The city's deputy mayor, Mohammad Mansur, points out that even Jewish families are aghast at the thought of Palestinian collaborators living next to them. In the Jewish city of Afula, anxious parents have demonstrated against two collaborators' families living across the street from the local primary school.

Mr. Mansur and other Arab community leaders wrote to Mr. Rabin last month saying the only realistic solution was to build a settlement for collaborators. He has dismissed their suggestion, but they have found a sympathetic response among hardline Jewish settlers.

"I am deeply ashamed to be Israeli," says West Bank settler leader Eiyakim Haetzi, who has given shelter and money to former collaborators. "I say put them near a Jewish settlement and build something for them. Build them a mosque, build them a school, build them a hospital and finish the problem once and for all."

The Observer.

Economy

Arabs fail to tap trade fund despite incentives

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states have failed to exploit a key fund they created five years ago to bolster flagging trade among them despite its attractive credit facilities, official figures showed Friday.

Although the Arab Trade Financing Programme (ATFP) offers loans at easy repayment and interest terms, credits extended to its 22 Arab League members have remained below 20 per cent of its annual capacity of \$1 billion.

Figures released by the Abu Dhabi-based ATFP showed it had received 43 credit applications in 1994 with a value of around \$198 million but it approved 35 applications worth \$130 million.

It was the highest level of credits the fund has endorsed since it was established by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in 1989. The figure brought to around \$500 million the total loans provided by the ATFP.

"Considering its annual financing capacity, this means that the fund is running at 10 per cent of capacity," said a source close to the AMF.

The AMF, which is overseeing economic reforms in the region, contributed half of the ATFP's capital. The rest came from other regional financial institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank.

Its operations cover only home-made products, except oil, with the aim of encouraging productivity as part of the reforms.

Experts said demand for ATFP credits had picked up in the past two years because inter-Arab political rifts were easing. But they noted the value of credits sought by members remained low as commercial deals are small.

"Most of the commercial transactions financed by ATFP did not exceed an average \$20 million each. This is because Arab non-oil exports are limited and their industries are similar," one expert said. "Another key factor is that Arab products cannot compete in some regional markets that are open to products from other countries."

Arab states still impose high customs tariffs on imports from each other despite a 1970 agreement on removing customs barriers as part of attempts to integrate their economies.

High tariffs combined with their limited industry, political differences, lack of finance and problems associated with storage and communications have blocked their bid to boost internal trade.

As a result, trade among the 22 members has remained below 10 per cent of their total trade over the past two decades.

Despite the creation of the ATFP, inter-Arab exports even declined to \$12.8 billion in 1993 from \$14.5 billion in 1990, while internal imports increased slightly to \$11.1 billion from around \$10.5 billion.

Oil exports account for around 35 per cent of total Arab trade and as much as 65 per cent of total exports.

Most of the crude exports are to Japan, Europe and other industrialised countries.

The ATFP project includes the establishment of a computerised trade data network that will link Arab markets and disseminate information on products, demand, supply, prices and economic indicators in each member states.

Yemen opposition rejects government reforms

SANAA (R) — Yemen's opposition has rejected government economic reforms which sparked protests this week, saying they threaten the impoverished country's political and economic stability.

Opposition parties issued a statement late Friday night condemning "economic measures approved by the government which impoverish the people, and threaten social peace and national stability."

They called on Yemen's ruling coalition government — the General Peoples Congress and the Islamist Islah Party — to allow all parties to "prepare a comprehensive programme to reform economic, financial and monetary policies."

They said such reforms should only be implemented if approved by the people in a national referendum.

Protests erupted after the government doubled prices of petrol, cooking gas and other energy products on Tuesday night as part of a reform programme.

Witnesses said police used tear gas and fired shots into the air to disperse demonstrators in two residential areas of the southern city of Aden on Wednesday, wounding four people.

The unrest seems to have subsided after the Muslim weekend and residents in Sanaa and Aden reported that the streets in both cities were quiet on Saturday.

Deputy minister of information, Mutahar Taqi, on Saturday denied that there were injuries during the unrest.

"Things are back to normal in all governorates," he told reporters.

Newspapers in the region reported that Yemen's security forces had cracked down on scores of currency dealers, arresting them on charges of damaging the local currency.

Residents in Aden and Sanaa said most currency dealing shops were closed on Saturday. Diplomatic sources said dozens of currency traders were detained in the past few days and their shops ordered shut by the authorities.

Relatives of some currency dealers confirmed the arrests and said others had gone into hiding.

The new measures included raising the official exchange rate to 50 riyals to the dollar from 12 while the greenback fetched 140 riyals on the black market, residents said.

Mr. Taqi said the government would press on with its plans and that economic reforms "would continue for three years."

Yemen has been plagued by a deep economic crisis, 100 per cent inflation and high unemployment for years. The country's 1994 civil war also dealt the economy a major blow.

The country's main seven opposition groups hold about 75 seats in the 301-member elected parliament.

UAE hikes cigarette import tax to 50 per cent

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Saturday joined its Arab Gulf neighbours in raising taxes on tobacco and cigarette imports in a drive to combat smoking and offset weak oil prices.

Finance and Industry Minister Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktum raised the tariff to 50 per cent from 30 per cent, the second increase in cigarette import taxes in the past two years.

"The decision was issued last week and it went into force today. It will affect all tobacco and cigarette imports," a ministry official told AFP.

The rise was in line with an agreement by the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to hike duties on imported tobacco in a campaign to cut consumption which has grown sharply due to low cigarette prices.

Dealers estimated tobacco consumption in the six members exceeded 20 billion cigarettes a year, with a value of more than \$1 billion.

The hikes also helped boost the non-oil revenues of GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE — all hit hard by a fall in oil prices and the dollar.

Experts said the tax increase would bring in more than \$40 million a year for the UAE as total tobacco imports exceeded one billion dirhams (\$272 million).

But a large part of such imports are reexported to Iran and other countries and cigarettes destined for export are exempted from the tax.

The move is the latest in a series of government measures to boost non-oil earnings to shore up a persistent budget deficit caused by low crude prices.

They include quadrupling customs tariffs on other imports to four per cent and introducing fees on residence, health, education, trade licences, traffic and other government services.

From less than \$200 million in 1975, the UAE's non-oil income surged to around \$870 million in 1994 and was projected to exceed \$1 billion in 1995, according to budget estimates.

Despite the tax increase, cigarette prices remained unchanged on Saturday but traders said they could be raised slightly in the next few weeks.

They ruled out a strong impact on consumption given the high per capita income of around \$18,000.

"The price rise naturally affects demand," one trader said. "But I don't think the effect will be strong as people here can afford it."

Most of the UAE's cigarette imports come from Britain, France, the United States, Japan and India. The average price of a Western 20-cigarette packet is around \$10.

Japan, China and EU top list of closed U.S. trade partners

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Japan, China and the European Union (EU) topped the list of countries under review for barriers to foreign trade in an annual U.S. report on access to foreign markets released here Friday.

Japan alone accounted for 40 pages, or 18 per cent of the 320-page report on foreign trade barriers, followed by the European Union at eight per cent and China at six per cent.

This reflected the fact that the three countries represent major trade imbalances with Washington — the United States had a trade deficit of \$65.7 billion with Japan last year, of \$29.5 billion with China and of \$8.1 billion with the EU.

Much of the Japanese section was devoted to Washington's continued failure to persuade Tokyo to open its auto market, which accounts for 60 per cent of Japan's massive \$65 billion trade surplus with the United States.

The report listed more than a dozen trade agreements that have been struck in the past 18 months, but said that "the U.S. government is strongly dissatisfied with the absence of progress in the auto and auto parts."

"Every effort will be made in the near future to encourage the government of Japan and Japanese companies to move forward in renewing the 1992 voluntary plans, in expanding dealer access, and in substantially revising regulations that effectively preclude U.S. firms from competing in the automotive aftermarket," the report said.

The report made no comment on Japan's detailed plan for deregulating its markets generally over five years released earlier Friday, as it went to press before the Japanese package was unveiled.

But it expressed disappointment with the draft version of the plan released previously.

As for the European Union, the report criticised its failure to ratify a 1994 bilateral agreement on opening the government procurement market.

"The United States government will continue to pursue opening of EU telecommunications procurement which is not covered by the agreement," the report said.

Washington also complained that it was due continued compensation payments linked to Spain's accession to the EU and paid since 1987, in the form of concessions on plywood and some chemicals, and warned "it will continue to pursue the full compensation it is owed for the adverse effects of EU enlargement."

As for the EU's setting of quotas for foreign broadcast material, "the United States has reserved its rights to take further action" and is closely monitoring the situation.

The trade report also devotes a considerable amount of time to China, saying that while it has made a great deal of effort to reform and open up its economy, many problems remain, notably its very high tariffs.

"At present, China still uses an intricate system of tariff and non-tariff administrative controls to implement its industrial and trade policies," the report said.

It noted that while China had gradually reduced tariffs on some products "its overall tariff level is still exceedingly high."

And it said that "China uses prohibitively high tariffs — in combination with import restrictions and foreign exchange controls — to protect its domestic industry and restrict imports."

The report also noted that Russia had a trade surplus with the United States for the first time in 1994, although it was small at \$66 million.

Arab World burdened by 15m out of work

CAIRO (AFP) — More than 15 million people are unemployed in the Arab World and 2.5 million more join their ranks every year, the head of the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO) said Saturday.

"The employment situation has not improved despite Arab countries' efforts. Negative signs have appeared in countries that were once distant from unemployment," Bakr Rasoul told the Arab daily Ash Sharq Al Awsat.

He said that 2.5 million new job-seekers are added yearly to 15 million unemployed, representing an average unemployment rate for Arab states of 15 per cent.

The ALO is to begin its 22nd session Monday in Alexandria, 225 kilometres north of Cairo.

The ALO director said that Arab countries have started to show the same "unemployment characteristics, such as unemployment of new entrants into the labour market, of qualified labour and of women," as well as longer-term unemployment.

"Economic reform programmes have not helped lighten the burden of unemployment," he added.

Mr. Rasoul said that labour migration between countries has done little to raise employment figures. He pointed out that the number of workers travelling to other Arab countries for work increased from 900,000 in 1975 to 3.5 million in 1985, but

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY APRIL 2, 1995
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have fine ideas for advancing and you can make the right contacts today, and tonight adhere to tried and true ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can improve conditions at home appreciably by the tasks and thought you put into them. Steer clear of a demanding person who hinders your progress.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) State your ideas to regular allies and gain their approval and aid. Take it easy tonight and rest up for tomorrow.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Plan just how you can become more prosperous today during the daytime and then cut down on expenses you have incurred.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Go to see that bigwig who can open new doors of opportunity for you today during the daytime and then be kind and gentle.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get into the privacy of your study and think over what your true desires are in the morning, and then plan how to gain them.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get off early with a fine friend today to gain some wish which means much to you, but don't spend too much in the morning.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you do something thoughtful for bigwigs, they will gladly give you the backing you need for a new assignment.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a fine day for expansion and growth, so get busy early today at that. Forget worries and limitations tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Find a new method to handle business affairs which need your full attention. Some special thought for your mate brings results.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get together with your dynamic partners and they will assist you with projects which are important to you.

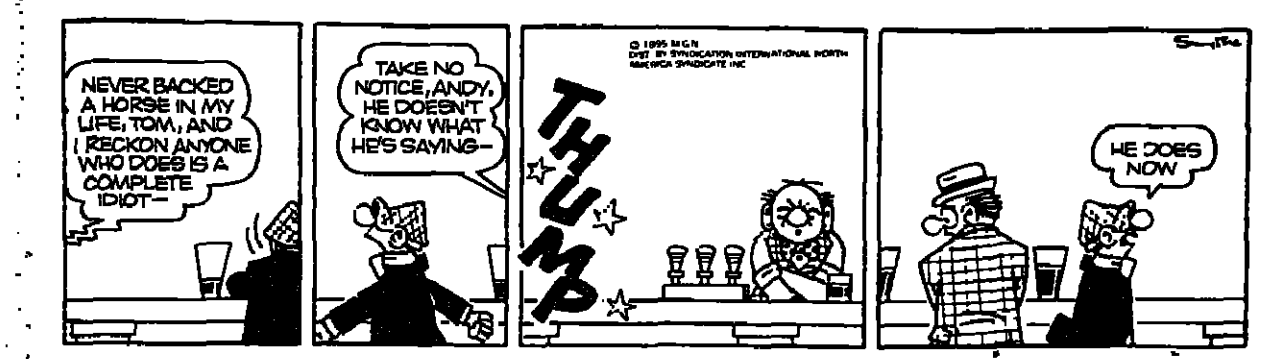
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Study the tasks ahead of you carefully and cooperate with fellow associates who have good ideas for expansion.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

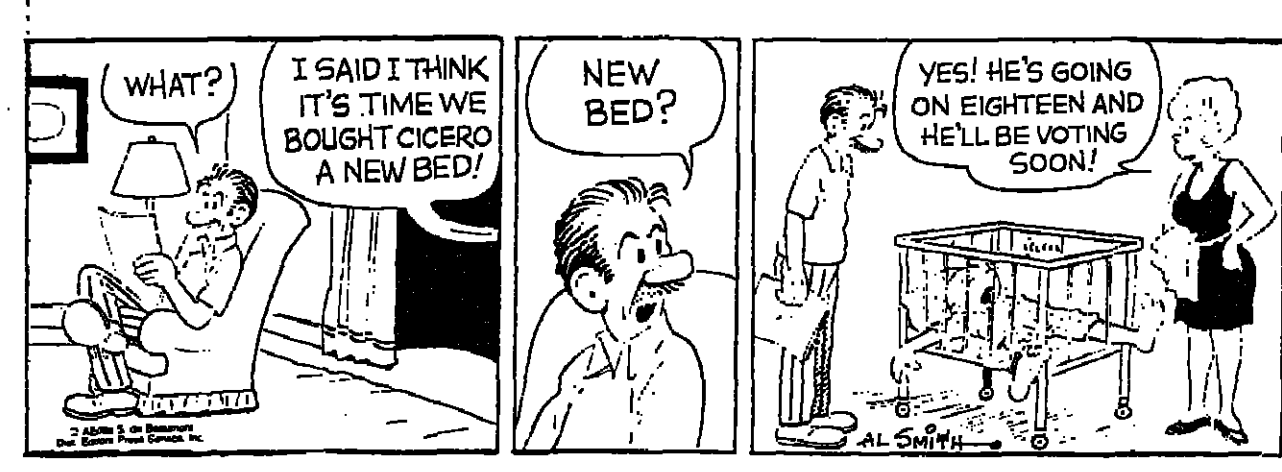
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF.



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KEVAN
TREXE
WHADOS
BIFCAR

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PEONY TESTY FLABBY UNLOAD
Answer: What the team needed during the hot streak — PLENTY OF FANS

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS
1 Colleague of Lancelot
5 Farinacci
10 Teddy material
14 Sea swallow
15 Rope fiber
16 Holland export
17 Send signals
18 Follows
19 Marked shark
20 Tool for John Henry
23 Stung negative
24 Impetuous
25 Milder
28 Consumed
31 Israeli port
32 Bubble on a bomber
34 Horse part
37 Hitchcock film, with "The"
40 Dance
41 Coupon word
42 Urinal
43 Chihuahua
44 Hybrid animal
45 Flexible wrap
48 Wise — owl
50 Maxwell Smart's sidekick
57 U.S. president
58 Wear away slowly
59 Golden call, for one
60 Dilly
61 Prop for Picasso
62 Bewildered
63 Not one
64 Flatbush hero of verse
65 Launcher
66 Composer
67 Oscar-winning actor
68 Catch sight of
69 Felt into a compact mass
70 Atlanta university
71 Falsified item
72 Thrown in with
73 Balmston
76 Reworthwhile
77 Journey
78 Indiana
79 English composer
80 Be full
81 Haunted lines
82 Nulley
83 Adolescent
84 Urnswag
85 Catch sight of
86 Staffordshire river
87 On the slim side
88 Storage room for food
89 Egyptian deity
90 Convey member
91 Triple
92 Paragon
93 Novoro of
94 Cerca
95 Bus garage
96 Finished
97 Eucalyptus
98 Squeaked
99 Probed
100 Quam's capital
101 Dred (to)
102 Mosquito genus
103 Stone mallet
104 Do-well
105 Fodder
106 Squelched
107 Quam's capital
108 Dred (to)
109 Mosquito genus
110 Stone mallet
111 Do-well
112 Logan or Rains

Investors take a shine to gold and silver

LONDON (R) — Gold prices soared to their highest levels since early October as a massive buying spree by U.S. investment funds spilled over from silver Friday.

Gold fixed at \$392 an ounce and peaked above \$396, well above Thursday's levels around \$383 as the funds poured money into the markets. Gold later eased to close at \$391.75.

"Yesterday was silver's day, today it's been gold's turn. The U.S. funds went after it in a big way," one London bullion dealer said.

Silver prices have now soared 10 per cent and gold nearly three per cent in under 24 hours.

Silver jumped from 475 to above 530 cents in hectic New York futures trading on Thursday as the market hit its highest level since late 1993.

Analysts traced the cause of the surge back to Thursday's half-point interest rate cut by the German central bank.

"The Bundesbank move was the key. The idea that Germany was willing to share the global inflation burden was interpreted by many investors as a reason to buy precious metals," said Zuhair Smith, bullion analyst at Union Bank of Switzerland.

"Here is the world's most prudent central bank cutting rates at a time of economic growth. It's taking risks when such words were not thought to be in its vocabulary."

The funds had taken the view that global rates were now heading lower, dealers said. "That's good for economic prospects and good for industrial metals like silver," one said.

Others said the rate cut had made the mark less attractive as a safe haven for funds and gold had benefited as a result.

So steep was silver's climb that the New York futures market announced a rise in margins, or deposits, for silver traders.

The exchange said it will raise spot-month margins to \$1,900 from \$1,400 per lot for clearing members and customer hedging transactions and to \$2,565 from \$1,890 for customer speculative transactions.

Saudi Arabia petrochemical income hits four-year high

ABU DHABI (AFP) — An increase in production and prices has boosted Saudi Arabia's petrochemical income to its highest level in four years as the kingdom presses on with further expansion, official figures show.

Net profits by the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) nearly doubled to 4.2 billion Saudi riyals (\$1.12 billion) in 1994 from around 2.12 billion riyals (\$565 million) in 1993, according to a SABIC report.

SABIC's board approved a dividend of 20 per cent to the Saudi government and other shareholders, the biggest cash distribution since the Arab World's largest chemical firm was established in 1977, according to the balance sheet.

"Cash dividend did not exceed 10 per cent of the capital in the previous year. This is the first time in SABIC's history that the management increases the dividend to shareholders," said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading United Arab Emirates stockbroker who deals in the company's shares.

A breakdown showed the 1994 net profit was the highest since 1989, when high prices boosted SABIC's earnings to around 47.6 per cent of the paid-up capital of 10 billion riyals (\$2.66 billion).

The level dropped to 30.3 per cent in 1990, to 23 per cent in 1991, to 19.6 per cent in 1992, to 21.2 per cent in 1993 and 42 per cent in 1994.

"The rise in 1994 profits reflected growth in output and marketing and an improvement in prices of various petrochemical products," the report said.

Production of petrochemicals, fertilisers, chemicals and petroleum products surged by 18.8 per cent to 16.2 million tonnes in 1994, boosting total sales by 47.8 per cent to 14.7 billion riyals (\$3.92 billion).

SABIC has been involved in major expansion projects and setting up new ventures to face growing domestic and external demand. It has set a production target of 20 million tonnes by the year 2000.

The Saudi government controls 70 per cent of the company while around 20 per cent is owned by Saudi citizens and the rest by other Gulf investors. The government said last year it would slash its shareholding by nearly half as part of economic reforms to offset low oil prices.

Saudi Arabia has around 260 billion barrels of oil reserves and produces nearly eight million barrels per day, accounting for 12 per cent of the total world crude supplies.

Its petrochemical output exceeds half the total Arab production of around 14 million tonnes.

The SABIC report showed its total assets grew by around 11.5 per cent to 41.44 billion riyals (\$11 billion), including seven billion riyals (\$1.86 billion) in liquidity.

of goods from China in 1994 and only exported to it the worth of \$12 million.

Mr. Lee, meanwhile, said his delegation visit was aimed at exploring prospects of investment in the Kingdom. He noted that there were many areas in which the two countries can cooperate, especially since Jordan produced phosphate and potash that his province needed.

In the meeting at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Dr. Smadi briefed Mr. Lee and his colleagues about Jordan's new investment law and called for joint projects between the two countries.

Mr. Murad told the delegation, led by Dalian province deputy prime minister Lee Yang, that the trade imbalance between the two countries was in favour of China. Mr. Murad noted that Jordan imported \$91 million worth

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AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 01/04/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PSC	640	121750	190.000	190.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	3780	171165	4.580	4.580
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	1567	7051	4.440	4.500
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	5750	8173	1.420	1.430
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1350	3501	2.550	2.560
THE HOUSING BANK	5450	33245	6.100	6.100
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	891	2546	2.850	2.870
JORDAN GULF BANK	6450	7998	1.180	1.240
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	8682	33917	3.900	3.810
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	200	960	4.900	4.800
BUSINESS BANK	1250	4210	3.300	3.280
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	750	2682	3.580	3.590
WEST JORDAN INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	2080	6246	3.020	3.060
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	184650	216794	1.140	1.200
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	30850	39084	1.240	1.300
BANKS SECTOR	284380	505755	INDEX NUMBER: 150.52	CHANGE: +0.25
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	200	370	1.800	1.850
JORDAN GENERAL INSURANCE	22657	59336	2.610	2.620
DELTA INSURANCE	500	1050	2.000	2.100
INSURANCE SECTOR	23327	60756	INDEX NUMBER: 136.75	CHANGE: +0.21
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	31250	51876	1.630	1.670
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	35150	55597	1.570	1.580
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	1000450	7203280	7.200	7.300
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	257950	1446008	6.080	6.380
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	3359	20601	5.850	6.140
JORDAN NATIONAL TRADING COMPANY	9400	28217	2.970	3.040
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	750	1575	2.000	2.100
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	1500	1800	1.180	1.200
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL TRADING CENTER	31750	34860	1.080	1.100
JORDAN PIPES FOUNDATION / ALBA	100	1035	10.050	10.350
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMER HOTELS	63900	155219	2.420	2.520
ARAB ENTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	347	1157	3.320	3.330
SERVICES SECTOR	1434001	9201462	INDEX NUMBER: 136.54	CHANGE: +0.85
ATTACHEES CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1000	1068	1.030	1.080
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	11598	35408	3.050	3.050
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1512	14188	9.350	9.400
JORDAN TRADING	415	3133	7.500	7.550
WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	600	1068	1.740	1.780
THE JORDANIAN COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	3140	13148	4.180	4.200
THE JORDAN WOODEN MILLS	682	5211	7.600	7.650
ARAB PETROCHEMICAL MANUFACTURING	8950	37207	4.140	4.160
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	200	1150	5.750	5.750
JORDAN DRYERS	200	466	2.330	2.330
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	1250	3415	2.700	2.730
SPINNING & WEAVING	3100	8082	2.550	2.610
DAIRY INDUSTRIES	2442	6171	2.550	2.550
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	1284	9969	7.650	7.650
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	108150	103835	930	940
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	159617	122238	680	710
ARAB WATER CONVEYING & TRADING	5350	75283	1.470	1.480
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	8050	17505	2.140	2.130
JORDAN ROBOCOOL INDUSTRIES	8200	9850	1.190	1.190
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	500	4.000	6.000	6.000
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	23200	16362	680	700
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	1150	5175	4.540	4.500
JORDAN SULPHUR-CHEMICALS	2800	4383	1.490	1.500
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	1150	7134	2.300	2.300
KAWTHER INVESTMENT	1350	2093	1.550	1.550
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	2950	10349	3.520	3.510
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	9850	20191	2.050	2.050
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	416650	527549	INDEX NUMBER: 120.50	CHANGE: +0.21
GRAND TOTAL	2130358	10295522	INDEX NUMBER: 142.41	CHANGE: +0.45
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		239495		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		283623		

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Municipality, businessmen resolve row

★ THE MUNICIPALITY of Greater Amman (MoGA) and the Union of Restaurant and Confectionery Proprietors have reached a compromise over fees to be collected from restaurants and confectionery shops in prime areas of Amman. According to the compromise, MoGA agreed to reduce the fees to JD 40 per square metre on the front yard and surrounding space used by restaurants and owners of patisseries in prime areas. MoGA originally sought JD 75 per square metre and then lowered the fees to JD 50. (Al Dustour).

The head of the union told the Jordan Times that the other category of businesses, which were originally required to pay fees at JD 60 per square metre and were later lowered to JD 45, should also benefit by the same amount of reduction (i.e. JD 10) given to "prime businesses" and, as such, pay only JD 35 per square metre.

★ THE ARABIAN Steel Pipes Manufacturing Company, a limited liability company, until Sept. 30, 1994 when it was transformed into a JD 6 million public shareholding company, will distribute six per cent dividends for 1994. Partners until the end of September 1994 will be given dividends at rate of 30.5 per cent of the old capital.

The company's total sales during last year amounted to 24,000 tonnes worth JD 10.83 million compared to 25,100 tonnes worth JD 11.18 million in 1993. Net profit at the end of December 1994 stood at JD 2.12 million of which JD 1.56 million belonged to the first nine months of last year and JD 0.56 million were posted in the remaining three months. The company, which produces black and galvanised steel pipes, hollow section tubes and steel sheets, reported 18 per cent of its output in 1994 compared to 23.7 per cent in the preceding year (Al Dustour).

★ THE GENERAL Assembly of the Glucose and Food Manufacturing Company has approved raising the capital of the company by JD 500,000 to JD 2.5 million. The capital increase is intended to provide funds to participate in the Union Company for Manufacturing Starch and to meet capital needs. The glucose company is expected to start operations in August 1995 (Al Dustour).

★ THE GENERAL assembly of the Jordan Medical Association decided to set up a committee to investigate the loss of JD 3 million from the association's retirement fund as a result of trading in the Amman Financial Market and investing in troubled companies (Al Ra'i).

★ THE JORDAN Medical Association accepted 531 doctors as new members last year, bringing the total of 11,208 at the end of 1994. Of the total, only 7,521 are practising doctors who are divided as follows: 3,886 male general practitioners, 762 female general practitioners, 2,705 male specialists and 166 female specialists (Al Ra'i).

★ PRODUCERS are under way to raise the capital of the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) from JD 7.5 million to JD 12 million this month after obtaining the approval of the Central Bank. Half of the capital increase will be offered to present shareholders in a private subscription while the other half will be put for public subscription at JD 2.5, representing JD 1 par value and JD 1.5 premium per share. The capital increase will provide JD 11 million for the bank to be lent to industrial entities and to create job openings. According to the IDB director-general, the Central Bank has made the capital increase a condition of reactivating a JD 10 million credit facility for export ventures (Al Ra'i).

DAVIS CUP

Sweden and United States take charge while Germany and Russia struggle

PARIS (AFP) — Champions Sweden and favourites the United States made brisk starts in their Davis Cup World Group quarter-finals Friday — but last year's finalists Russia and 1993 titleholders Germany both struggled.

Austria's Davis Cup hopes, already seriously compromised through illness and injury, all but disappeared in Varjo.

Magnus Larsson beat Austrian number-one Thomas Muster in straight-sets 6-1, 7-6 (7-5), 7-5 and former world number-one Stefan Edberg beat Alexander Antonitsch 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

The Austrians, who scored a remarkable 4-1 victory over Spain in the last round, had been unable to field their first choice team.

Gilbert Schaller, currently ranked 47th and fresh from a confidence-boosting victory in last weekend's ATP event in Casablanca, was taken ill and confined to his hotel bedroom with a bad cold and temperature earlier in the week.

And the Austrian problems were not helped when it was revealed that 29-year-old Antonitsch, promoted by non-playing captain Ronald Leutgeb to take over the second singles spot as well as play the doubles, has been carrying a wrist injury.

Sweden, who can rely on one of the world's best doubles teams in Jonas Bjorkman and Jan Appel on Saturday, are expected to clinch their place in next September's semi-final against either the United States or Italy before Sunday's reverse singles are played.

World No. 1 Pete Sampras,



A disappointed Boris Becker

making his first appearance on clay this year, beat Renzo Furlan 7-6, 6-3, 6-0 on Saturday to give the United States a 3-0 lead over Italy in their Davis Cup World Group quarter-final.

Sampras struggled to find his form in the early stages but eventually proved too strong for the Italian.

The match was played in cold, blustery conditions having been postponed on Friday because of heavy rain after world number two Andre Agassi had defeated top-ranked Italian Andrea Gaudenzi in straight sets in the opening match.

The United States will clinch a place in the last four if doubles pairing Richey Re-

neberg and Jared Palmer can overcome Stefano Pescosolido and Cristian Brandi later on Saturday.

"I like Palermo, but the weather could be better," grinned American team captain Tom Gullikson, adding: "I'm hoping for 75 degrees (22 C) and perfect conditions on Saturday."

Gullikson paid a warm tribute to Agassi, who was playing his first match on the slow red clay surface since last year's French Open.

"Gaudenzi played well in the first two sets, but Andre was able to hurt him more on the return of serve."

"He finished the points at the net and threw in a few

drop shots. I think he played great and he certainly got us off to a good start."

Agassi said: "I feel very honoured to see the respect that the crowd had. They were supportive but polite. It was absolutely perfect."

The Australian Open champion said he did not think the heavy conditions would upset Sampras, despite the fact that his teammate and tour rival will be playing on his least favourite surface.

"It's possible for him not to play so well. But Pete feels good and I'm not so sure the conditions will have an impact."

Boris Becker, who boasts one of the best Davis Cup records in the world, slumped

to a shock defeat against Paul Haarhuis to leave Germany struggling in their clash with the Netherlands at Utrecht.

Becker, the world number three who had previously won 34 of 36 Davis Cup singles matches, went off the boil after a bright start and was beaten 6-4, 2-6, 4-6, 6-7 (4-7) by the world's 38th ranked player.

It was left to Becker's teammate Michael Stich to steady the boat by seeing off big-serving Dutch number-one Richard Krajicek 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

In Moscow, Russia and South Africa also completed the first day level-pegging at 1-1.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov gave the home side an ideal start with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Marcus Ondruska. But Wayne Ferreira hit back for the South Africans, beating Alexander Volkov 7-6 (7-4), 4-6, 6-7 (5-7), 6-2, 6-4.

Kafelnikov, the Russian number-one, was always in charge against Ondruska. Having taken the first set in 26 minutes, he dictated the pace for the rest of a match which ended with roars of approval from the 10,000 spectators.

Kafelnikov responded by throwing his shirt into the crowd.

"It was very important for us to win the first match," he told a news conference afterwards, adding: "I think we have now 60 per cent chance to win it all."

The second rubber, which at one stage looked promised to Volkov, ended in disappointment for the home fans.

Ferreira, currently ranked 11th in the world, ended on top after a 3hrs 41mins epic.

Big basketball player emerges from small Oklahoma town

GANS, Oklahoma (AP) — One stop sign. One general store. One school. One part-time police officer. It takes just one mile (1.6 kilometres) to get through Gans, home of one 7-foot (2.13-metre) centre who in these parts has become a legend.

In any other town, Oklahoma State's Bryant Reeves might have made the folks back home proud — big eight conference player of the year as a sophomore, first team all-big eight three straight years and now a berth in the final four semifinals of the NCAA college basketball championship tournament.

Reeves did more than that: He put Gans on the map.

"People never would have known where it was," school superintendent Charles Ballard said. "But anyone who follows college basketball knows about Bryant Reeves, and anyone who knows about Bryant Reeves knows about Gans."

Gans, population 218, is located 15 miles (24 kilometres) west of the Arkansas border. Most residents either raise cattle or, like Reeves' father, work in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The school has about 280 students and for years had just one sport until baseball was added this year. Drivers in pickup trucks wave at everyone they pass.

The community is so tight that Reeves once re-

jected suggestions that he move to a bigger school to improve his chances of playing major college basketball.

"Bryant didn't want to," said his mother, Carolyn, a teacher's aide. "He said this was his home. And they found him."

Indiana coach Bob Knight came to Gans, and so did Eddie Sutton from Oklahoma State. Tom Kennedy remembers "a large crowd — about 30" turning out for Sutton's visit.

"Ol' Sutton had some faith. Bryant awkward because he was growing so fast. But coach Sutton knew more than the rest of us," said Kennedy, who lives a few houses down from Reeves' grandmother.

Reeves indeed was a project at Oklahoma State. Sutton said he had hoped Reeves could contribute by the time he was a sophomore.

But Reeves was starting as a freshman and was big eight player of the year the next season. As a junior, he hit a halfcourt shot at the buzzer to send a game against Missouri into overtime. He set a school record with 20 rebounds, along with 30 points, in a win over Kansas this year.

Big country kept getting bigger.

"His whole career has been like a fairytale," said Mrs. Reeves, who flew on an airplane for the first time when the family travelled to Baltimore for

NCAA East Regional wins over Drexel and Alabama. "I never dreamed he would get this far."

The townsfolk, aware that Reeves had potential because of his size alone, also admit being a little surprised at how much he has developed. Frank Anglen held his hand to knee-level to show how long he's known Reeves, then smiled as he gradually raised his hand as high as he can.

Anglen pointed beyond his house to a slab of concrete in a field where Reeves once played — it was the only basketball court in town besides the high school gym.

For those who know him, big country is still Bryant. He still calls men "sir" and women "ma'am," and he loves to fish — a bulletin board in the general store called the "brag board" shows Reeves with a dozen strippers.

They see him when he comes home and ask him about bass and crappie, not rebounds and blocks.

To everyone else they meet, however, the talk is all basketball and all about big country.

The day after the Oklahoma State cowboys beat Massachusetts to win the East Regional, Gans was deluged with media — television stations and their helicopters, a phone call from a radio station in Chicago, express carriers with overnight mail trying to find the home of Carl and Carolyn Reeves.

OneAustralia continues rebound

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Champagne and the promise of a week's worth of all-nighters waited at the dock as John Bertrand's OneAustralia campaign continued its remarkable rebound from disaster.

Bertrand, the only man to take the America's Cup from America, sailed the yacht OneAustralia into the Louis Vuitton Cup finals for challengers with a victory over Nippon on Friday.

Bertrand has been sailing his year-old backup boat since his newest sailboat broke in two and sank in heavy wind and seas during a race on March 5.

"They call it character building. We don't need any more character building," Bertrand said. "We need to beat Team New Zealand and that's the objective."

The finals between the trans-Tasman rivals begin on April 11. Team New Zealand went undefeated on the water through 32 races.

The winner will go on the meet the U.S. defender in the America's Cup match beginning May 6.

Flying a huge flag of a boxing kangaroo, OneAustralia was backed into its berth and hoisted out of the water to begin what could be the most extensive overhaul in America's Cup history.

Designers have been busy doing computer simulations, and boat builders have been brought up from down under.

By Friday night, carbon-fiber dust was flying. The work must be done by next Saturday.

"It will be a tough road, but that's what it's been since we lost our boat," Bertrand said. "If we win the America's Cup, it will be a greater victory than 1983."

In 1993, Bertrand sailed the wing-keeled Australia II to one of the biggest upsets in sports history, beating Dennis Conner to end the New York Yacht Club's 132-year winning streak.

On the defender side, America3 took its bitter battle against Conner to the water and decisively beat Stars and Stripes to avoid elimination for the second straight day.

Sailed by 15 women and tactician Dave Dellenbaugh, America3's Mighty Mary regained the lead early on the third leg and went on to beat Stars and Stripes by 2 minutes, 4 seconds.

Mighty Mary tied Stars and Stripes 3-3 in the battle for the spot opposite pact 95's Young America in the Citizens Cup finals beginning April 10.

It was the second straight loss for Conner, who still awaits an international jury's ruling on protests filed by America3 and Pact 95 over Stars and Stripes changing its damaged keel in mid-round.

Once again, Conner had to look at a red protest flag flapping from his opponent's yacht. Young America flew a protest flag in its 44-second win on Thursday.

The jury convened for the third straight night on Friday, but didn't reach a decision.

If the jury rules against Conner, the change to his boat could be declared illegal and he could be disqualified.

Conner, who has won the America's Cup three times, can still clinch the finals berth with a win over Young America in the last semifinal race on Saturday.

If Young America wins, Mighty Mary and Stars and Stripes will have a sailoff on Sunday.

"We've been fighting tooth

and nail to get here this whole round." America3 crew member Dawn Riley said. "There is a protest and there is a race tomorrow. Those are two variables. Maybe one will go in our favour."

Friday's race began under a cloudless sky with a west wind of 6 knots.

Stars and Stripes won the start by two seconds, but Mighty Mary built a small lead during a tacking duel sailing upwind on the first leg.

The previously all-woman crew made a mistake, though, when it went too far out on the port layline and left too big a gap for Stars and Stripes. Conner's boat rounded the first mark 12 seconds ahead.

Stars and Stripes led by 11 seconds at the Leeward Buoy, but that's where Mighty Mary made its move.

Mighty Mary gained from a wind shift on the right side of the course and led by almost two lengths the first time the 75-foot boats crossed on opposite tacks.

Mighty Mary kept the lead this time and rounded the windward mark 17 seconds ahead.

Two headsail changes by Stars and Stripes and a big wind shift helped America3 gain 1:43 on the final straightaway of the six-leg, 18.55-mile course.

OneAustralia led the whole way to beat Nippon by 2:41. That eliminated Chris Dickson's NZL-39 and prevented an all-New Zealand Challenger finals.

Team New Zealand forfeited its last three semifinal races so it could get a head start on testing its two boats. That meant NZL-39 had to sail the course alone Friday to earn a meaningless point.

Motorcycling Grand Prix

Doohan grabs pole position and heads for victory

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Reigning grid king Michael Doohan of Australia is ready to claim a third victory at the 3,505-kilometre Shah Alam circuit near Kuala Lumpur after claiming pole position for Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix.

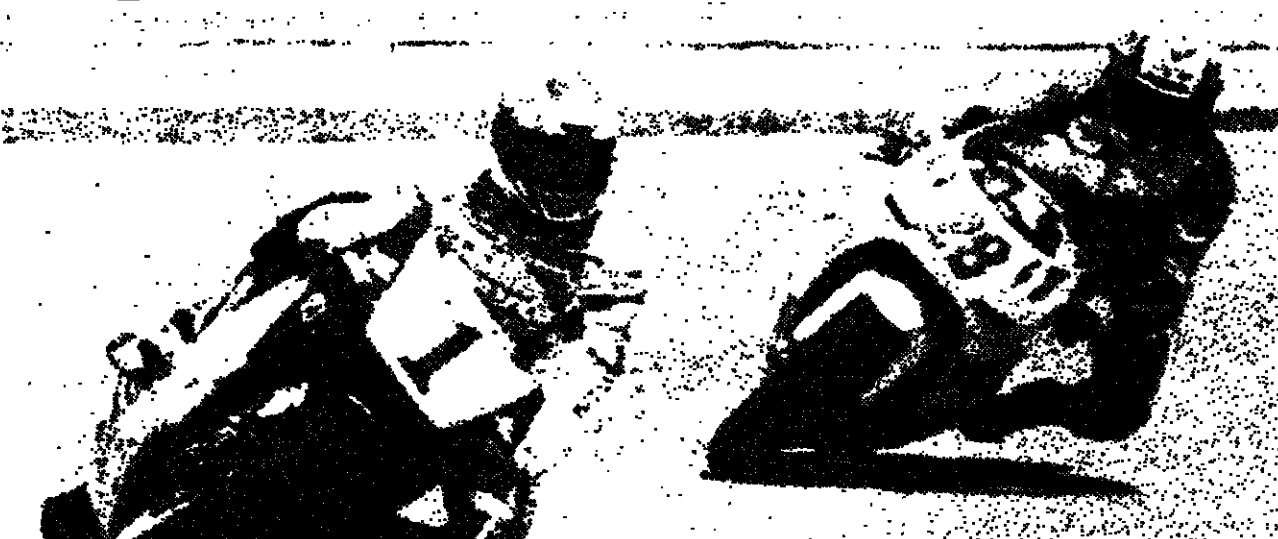
The Australian, fresh from last week's win in the first leg of the world Grand Prix at Sydney's eastern Creek Circuit, is in top form although he was unable to improve on Friday's time of 1 minute 25.059 seconds.

Doohan, who clocked 1:25.266 Saturday, is nevertheless dominating the grid and he admits that he's enjoying the feeling.

Riding is definitely more enjoyable when you're not having to chase problems. Everything is pretty good at the moment," he said.

The 30-year-old Rider, who won here in 1991 and 1994, said: "We have tested tires for the cool this morning and also when it's warm. The only thing is it rains, then we will be just trying to finish."

Holding second-fastest time was Marlboro team's Roberts Luca Cadalora of Italy astride his Yamaha with 1:25.142. Saturday's session also saw a few riders moving



World champion Michael Doohan (left) of Australia and France's Bruno Bonhuil negotiate a corner at the Malaysian Grand Prix (AFP photo)

toward the pole position which may see an exciting speed chase at Sunday's race.

Among those to watch is first time 500cc rider Loris Capirossi. The Italian and former 125cc champion proved a foe to be reckoned with as he clocked the third fastest time.

Meanwhile, defending champion Massimiliano Biaggi of Italy kept pole position with an improved time of

1:25.939 over Friday's 1:27.033 in the 250cc category.

He looks set to take the title at Sunday's Malaysian world motorcycle Grand Prix while eastern Creek winner Ralf Waldmann of Germany kept his third position on the grid behind Japan's Tetsuya Harada.

Waldmann, who was fighting a slight health problem in

the morning, however, is optimistic about Sunday's race.

"What is giving me a lot of confidence is that except for Biaggi, nobody else seems to be consistently faster than me. The setup change we did from yesterday to today worked out very well and we're ready for tomorrow," he said.

In the 125cc group, Japan's Haruchika Aoki claimed pole

position with the fastest time of 1:31.144, edging world champion Kazuto Sakata, who will still be in the front row with the fourth-fastest time.

Dirk Raudies of Germany took the second position while Akira Saito of Japan came in third-fastest.

Sunday's race will start at noon with the 250cc, followed by 500cc and 125cc.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIA HIRSCH

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠KQ 773 ♠9873 ♠A102
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 Pass 2 Pass
3 Pass ?

What action do you take?
A.—Your hand looks n-trump oriented, but with only one stopper to the unbid suits you can hardly try that strain. Since your two-over-one response promised a second bid, the only one available to you is three hearts.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠K10 788 ♠Q2 ♠AK8532
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ 1 2 4 ?

What action do you take?
A.—What can you do? The auction has soared into the stratosphere before you could make a rebid. Despite your six-card suit, you have a seven-loser hand—definitely a minimum. Pass and see what action partner wants to take.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ984 ♠K6 72 ♠KJ54
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East

1 ♠ 2 ♠ 3 ♠ Pass
? What do you bid now?
A.—With the lead coming through your king of hearts, chances for an 11-trick contract have dimmed. However, some of the value of the king of hearts can be recouped by bidding three no trump.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠E10 73 ♠A98632 ♠J982
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?
A.—If you are sure partner has four clubs, the hand is too slam-

oriented for a raise. To save a level of bidding and cater to the possibility that partner might have jumped with a three-card suit on an unbalanced hand and is probing for the right spot, we would temporize with three diamonds to see what develops.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠J972 ♠K4 ♠K83 ♠KJ65
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Dbl ?

What action do you take?
A.—Your duty is to tell partner the hand belongs to you. The way to do that is to redouble. A jump to three

clubs would be preemptive and to bid spades with that puny suit could get partner off to a costly lead should the opponents declare.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K6 ♠AQ1098 ♠A82 ♠K63
What is your opening bid?

A.—Obviously, the choices lie between one heart and one no trump. If you don't bid one no trump when holding a five-card major, your problem is solved—for the moment! We don't know what you intend rebidding should partner respond one spade. One no trump is a far more descriptive bid and less likely to get you into trouble.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ligier retain Suzuki for Argentina

PARIS (R) — The French Ligier Formula One team said on Friday they had retained Japan's Aguri Suzuki to drive in the Argentine Grand Prix in Buenos Aires on April 9. Suzuki made his debut for the team last Sunday in the Brazilian Grand Prix where he was promoted to sixth place after the disqualification of Benetton's Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard in a Williams. Ligier said Suzuki had proved extremely consistent with a good

turn of speed despite a steering problem during the second half of the race, the first of the 1995 season.

Early goals enough for PSG

PARIS (AFP) — Two goals in the first half an hour were enough to clinch Paris St. Germain's 2-1 home victory over Cannes in Friday's French first division clash. PSG, who play the Benetton's Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard in a Williams. Ligier said Suzuki had proved extremely consistent with a good

Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Tel.: 625155
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAM THEATRE
Tom Hanks in Forrest Gump Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15		Andy Garcia — Mee Ryan in When A Man Loves A Woman Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakhit & Andadileh Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 CONCORD '2' Jean-Claude Van Dam STREET FIGHTER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00		Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" in the political satire Hi Citizen written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaf daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday —Hafsa Al Agha in the children's play ★Sa'di's Return★	Presents Abu Awwad in the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sunday.

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Taiwanese leader arrives here today on private visit

By Rana Sabbagh

AMMAN (R) — Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui's upcoming visit that starts Sunday is "private" and had no political significance, officials said.

Mr. Lee is expected to arrive in Amman on Sunday from the United Arab Emirates on his first visit to the Middle East and his third overseas trip since becoming president in 1988.

The officials said he will hold an "unofficial" meeting with Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Prince Abdullah, and Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi.

Prince Hassan made two visits to Taiwan, the last in 1990, when Taipei granted Jordan \$20 million to support its economy.

"It is a private visit with no political dimensions," said a senior Jordanian official, who requested anonymity.

"Our position towards China remains unchanged... we only recognise the People's Republic of China in line with an agreement signed on April 17, 1977 and we consider Taiwan part of it," he told Reuters.

China's envoy to Jordan, Shi Gie Wang, lobbied hard to block Mr. Lee's visit, meeting with top government officials.

"All what he got was assurances that it is going to be a private low-key visit, that he will not get a chance to hold a press conference or even have the media cover his

arrival and departure," one diplomat said.

China, which has viewed Taiwan as a renegade province since the end of a civil war in 1949, staunchly opposes any official contacts between Taipei and Beijing's diplomatic allies.

The Information Ministry said it was banning Jordanian and foreign media correspondents from covering the trip.

Mr. Lee will be staying at the Al Hashimiyah guest palace outside Amman.

Taiwan's trade mission in Amman closed down for three days, apparently to avoid having to make any public comments.

Mr. Lee is accompanied by a powerful team of Taiwan businessmen.

At home, Mr. Lee's tour is seen as an important effort to break out of the island's enforced diplomatic isolation. But analysts said the two countries he will visit have more to offer Taiwan than a little dignity on the international stage.

Taiwan sold Amman cars, machinery, spare parts and clothes worth \$60 million in 1994 and imported Jordanian potatoes and phosphates for \$20 million.

Kwang Hwa Investment Holding Co., a company under Taiwan's ruling Nationalist Party, plans to cooperate with Jordan in developing mineral resources in the dead sea.

"After the visit I believe... follow-up actions such as signing investment guarantee

agreements and furthering many investment cases will gradually emerge," Kwang Hwa President Chang Chung-Pu told Reuters in Taipei.

Agencies add: Mr. Lee became the first Taiwanese president to visit the Middle East since 1977 when Yen Chia-Kan made a trip to Saudi Arabia.

Taiwan newspapers said Mr. Lee was scheduled to meet Sheikh Zayed Ben Al Nahayan of the UAE to discuss oil exploration and petrochemical joint ventures.

In Jordan, Mr. Lee will also preside over a ceremony to transfer Taiwanese machinery technology to the country, the China Times newspaper said.

But Mr. Lee had to stay away from Israel, which reportedly withdrew an earlier invitation for fear of damaging its relations with China.

Taiwan's foreign ministry refused to comment on the reports, but officials of the ruling Nationalist Party, which has planned aeronautic and financial ventures with Israel, have blamed premature media exposure for the withdrawal.

Mr. Lee, 72, made unofficial visits to the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand last year, though the three countries all recognise China.

Taiwan is the seat of the nationalist government that fled the communist takeover of the Chinese mainland in 1949.

Taiwan's trade with the UAE reached \$866.1 million.



A helicopter takes off from a Turkish position the Turkish offensive against Kurdish separatists continues (AFP photo)

More unrest reported in Bahrain

MANAMA (AP) — Security authorities arrested a prominent Muslim preacher in a dawn raid on his home Saturday, sparking riots in the Shiite Muslim stronghold southwest of the capital.

Sheikh Abdul Ameer Al Jamri, 55, a former member of the Parliament dissolved in 1975, has been preaching sermons in the local mosque criticising the government and demanding the restoration of the legislature.

Residents of villages around the Beni Jamra suburb where Sheikh Jamra lives said fierce clashes between Shiite protesters and security forces erupted after the cleric was arrested.

They said police fired tear gas and gunshots were heard. One person was reported killed, with several others wounded or arrested.

There was no immediate official word on the violence or the reported casualties.

Bahrain is an important regional financial centre and the U.S. Central Command, which maintains military forces in the Gulf, has its regional headquarters there.

Bahrain has been swept by unrest since December, when widespread rioting, mainly by

disgruntled young Shiites, flared for two weeks. The trouble has erupted sporadically ever since.

The protesters are demanding the return of parliament and more jobs. An estimated 30,000 of the 500,000-strong population are unemployed, a problem that is starting to hit other Gulf states.

The unemployment in Bahrain has hit the low-income Shiites, who comprise more than half the indigenous population, particularly hard.

Security authorities have arrested several prominent Shiite preachers and deported several since the trouble erupted more than three months ago.

Two of Sheikh Jamri's sons live in exile in London. A third son and Sheikh Jamri's son-in-law are serving long prison sentences for political agitation during the 1980s, according to local residents.

By mid-morning Saturday, the situation in Beni Jamra, about 15 kilometres from downtown Manama, appeared to be under control.

Police officers in jeeps were deployed on all roads leading into the area. A police helicopter hovered overhead. Witnesses claimed it had landed earlier on the campus of Bahrain University's engineering college about 15 kilometres away during a demonstration there.

There was no official confirmation of any trouble at the college. But the unrest has recently spread to Bahrain's schools and educational institutions.

A teenager was killed by a police rubber bullet last week in a school clash.

A policeman, a Pakistani, was burned to death last week when his jeep was attacked with firebombs. Another officer was wounded.

At least five policemen have been killed in the violence since December, according to official count. The authorities have started putting people arrested over the last few weeks on trial for sabotage.

Ten men, described mainly as carpenters, officeboys and drivers, are said to have confessed to murdering a senior police officer and will go to trial soon.

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Iraqi lawmaker expects solution soon on Americans

BAGHDAD (R) — A high-ranking member of Iraq's parliament said on Saturday he expected a breakthrough shortly regarding two Americans whose jailing after crossing the border illegally has prompted protests from Washington.

"We believe that the coming few days will solve this problem," Haseeb Aref, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, told Reuters when asked about the fate of William Barloon and David Dalbert.

He added that he expected the problem to be resolved by resorting to international treaties.

"We find that the best solution for it lies in the agreements between us, the United Nations... Vienna and Geneva pacts."

"There is no problem in this," Mr. Aref said as the 250-member assembly started its spring session.

Mr. Barloon and Mr. Dalbert, who say they got lost on a trip to visit friends in the demilitarised zone between Kuwait and Iraq, were arrested on March 13 and are serving an eight-year sentence for illegal entry.

U.S. officials have said they were civilian aircraft maintenance workers and have demanded their release.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said this week that Washington held Iraq "directly responsible for their well-being and welfare."

Mr. Aref said he hoped their imprisonment would

not further sour Iraq's relations with the outside world, particularly the United States, which is spearheading efforts to maintain sanctions slapped on Iraq for invading Kuwait in 1990.

The sanctions have blocked Iraq's vital oil exports and shattered its economy.

"We do not have a problem with any country in the world," Mr. Aref said. "There was an issue, it is over and a decision has been taken on it."

Baghdad insists the case has no bearing on the U.N. sanctions or the tough U.S. stand. It also says their plight has attracted undue publicity at a time when several other Westerners have been jailed in Iraq for similar offences.

The United States has ruled out concessions to Iraq to obtain the men's release. It has also said it would resort to all options available to get them released.

Iraq on Wednesday allowed a Western reporter into the Baghdad prison to see the detainees. Polish diplomats, running the U.S. interests section in Iraq, have visited three times.

The two are expected to appeal soon. If the court upholds the sentence, the Americans will have to ask for clemency which under Iraq's constitution can be granted only by the president, Saddam Hussein.

Sources at the Polish embassy said they were arranging for another visit on Monday to take clothing, food and other items.

Khartoum conference hears call for action

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Muslim fundamentalist leaders from across the globe denounced Israel, Western governments and Russia's drive against Chechen rebels in sermons here as an Islamic conference moved into its final session Saturday.

In an unprecedented move, conference organiser Hassan Turabi, seen as the power behind the government in Sudan, invited Sheikh Naim Kassem, deputy leader of the Hizbollah movement in Lebanon, to lead Friday prayers at a Sunni mosque in Khartoum.

In another mosque near the university Ishaq Farhan, leader of the Islamic Action Front in Jordan, told Sudanese worshippers to "oppose any normalisation with the (Israeli) enemy."

He said Israel was "the greatest danger."

Akbar Mohammad, representing the Nation of Islam, read out a message from the American movement's leader Louis Farrakhan accusing Western powers of trying to wipe out Islam.

"Islam is under attack. It has always been the desire of the powers of the West to destroy Islam. What the world needs is Islam. We must not allow ourselves to be reduced to victims of the mosque," Mr. Farrakhan said.

New militant chief calls on Zeroual to solve insurgency

ALGIERS (AP) — The new head of a leading Muslim fundamentalist rebel movement has called on the government to rapidly reach "a legal and decisive solution" to a bloody three-year-old insurgency.

Government sources on Friday dismissed the message by Mezrag Madani, leader of the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), as another attempt by militants to look like moderates. But it was the most public gesture yet by militants seeking talks with the government.

Word of the statement, published in a newspaper this week, came as the army was pursuing an offensive against the militants in western Algeria, where newspapers reported about 800 guerrillas were killed.

In an open message to President Liamine Zeroual, militants and the Algerian people, Mr. Madani indicated support of efforts to reach a negotiated settlement with the military-backed government.

Mr. Madani, 35, was confirmed early this month as "interim" head of the Islamic Salvation Army, the military wing of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which was headed to win January 1992 parliamentary elections cancelled by the government.

He said he "salutes the parties and figures who have chosen the side of the people," in reference to legal opposition parties who have joined the FIS in calling for talks with the government.

Appearing to take a moderating stand, Mr. Madani formally addressed Mr. Zeroual: "Every day that passes renders the crisis more complex... so Mr. President, it's necessary to go quickly move toward a legal solution."

But Mr. Madani, in calling on all to "surpass our immediate and temporary interests," also said: "The solution is the Koran."

The statement was published in this week's issue of the newspaper Le Nation, and sources close to the Muslim fundamentalist movement, speaking on anonymity, said the statement was likely written in February.

Analysts in the government, speaking on customary condition of anonymity, said they saw nothing new in the statement and called it another manoeuvre by the FIS to appear moderate.

The government has refused to talk with the militants until they lay down their arms.

Algeria, has been unable to influence the more extreme Armed Islamic Group, rebels concentrated in the Algiers area and who have claimed responsibility for attacks on government targets as well as civilians.

Mr. Madani is backed by FIS leaders Abass Madani, who is not related, and Ali Belhadj. Both are reportedly held under house arrest after being transferred from prison, allowing them more outside contacts.

U.S. repeats call

The United States on Friday repeated its call for dialogue among all parties who are prepared to renounce violence in Algeria.

"As a general position, we have long advocated political dialogue among all of the parties who are prepared to renounce violence as the best hope for restoring peace to Algeria," State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelley said.

"We believe it's the only effective means of marginalising those who are dedicated to a violent solution to the crisis," she added.

But she noted that "the leader of one of the militant factions has called for a dialogue with the government and denounced the abuses."

"We have welcomed past openings of this type such as that which arose from the Rome platform of Algerian opposition parties meeting under the auspices of the Saint Egidio Society," the spokeswoman recalled.

Jordanian parties slam Turkish incursion into Iraq

AMMAN (I.T.) — Opposition parties in Jordan on Saturday condemned the Turkish invasion on northern Iraq and accused the U.S. of supporting the operation.

A statement signed by 11 political parties said the Turkish forces were carrying out a large-scale military operation in northern Iraq under the pretext of chasing out the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) in the Iraqi territory.

These operations, the statement said, were carried out with the support and backing of the U.S. "The killings of innocent civilians are a flagrant violation of human rights," the statement added.

The opposition parties called for lifting the sanctions on Iraq and demanded that the Arab League and all Arab and Islamic countries take a firm stand against the Turkish military operation and against all actions that would infringe upon Iraqi sovereignty.

The opposition parties deplored the use of violence to solve the issue of Turkish Kurds.

They called for the immediate withdrawal of Turkish forces from Iraqi territories and demanded that the Turkish government to use democratic dialogue to solve the Kurdish problem.

The statement was signed by the Islamic Action Front Party, the Progressive Arab Baath Party, the National Action Front Party, the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Party, the Jordanian Democratic Arab Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Union Party, the Jordanian Demo-

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Taj Mahal to be demolished and rebuilt — report

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The Indian government has decided to demolish the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world, and rebuild it elsewhere to save the Mughal structure from pollution, the Hindustan Times said Saturday.

The authorities had decided overnight Friday to tear down the 17th century treasure of Mughal architecture to save it from industrial pollution that is turning its white marble yellow, the Times said.

The decision to pull down the structure, built by Mughal Emperor Shahjahan as proof of his everlasting love for his wife Mumtaz Mahal, was taken after an alarming report by the New York-based Institute for the Restoration of Monuments under the directorship of one Madama Monroe, the paper said. The tongue-in-cheek story was published on April's Fool's Day.

Socrates tomb find announced on April Fool's day

ATHENS (AFP) — Greek officials said they had located the tomb of the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, along with the remains of the poison he used to commit suicide, and then declared the discovery had been an early April Fool's prank.

The alleged tomb was discovered near the base of the Acropolis during excavations work to build the Athens Metro System, the Culture Ministry said, announcing a sensational find by archaeologists. The excavation team discovered a man's skeleton, two amphora, a vase with the remains of a substance containing poison, and a piece of leather, the officials said excitedly.

Acropolis Museum Director Petros Kaligias said — according to the ministry in its early report — that since the tomb dated from between 400 and 390 B.C., there was a "strong possibility" that the tomb was that of Socrates. The philosopher died in 399 B.C. having been forced to drink hemlock.

Whale of a joke has journalists fooled

WINDHOEK (AFP) — Namibian government officials spent two years perfecting an April Fool's Day joke preparing to "discover" the remains of a "prehistoric" whale recently uncovered in this capital city. Journalists were invited to view the "excavation site" on the property of the Environment and Tourism Ministry, South African News Agency (SAPA) said Friday.

Respected palaeontologist and geologist Martin Pickford convincingly explained to the assembled crowd that the whale probably dated back two million years when the sea level was 400 metres (1,320 feet) higher. Pickford said geological movement would have lifted the bones even higher. Windhoek is 1,720 metres (5,670 feet) above sea level. Conservation scientist Mike Griffin suggested to journalists it could have been a freshwater dolphin. But after many questions, detailed explanations and a television interview, amused ministry officials told dismayed journalists that the story was an April Fool's joke. The remains were those of a pilot whale buried by Griffin two years ago to clean the bones.

Error makes Hitler, Himmler 'citizens of honour'

PLATTING, Germany (AFP) — The names of Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler, architects of World War II, were listed by error among the citizens of honour of the German town of Plating, a local spokesman admitted Friday. Recorded as "chancellor of the Reich" and "leader of the Reich SS", Hitler and Himmler figures among the 21 "citizens of honour" featured in the Bavarian town's official yearbook. Embarrassed official said the names would be blacked out by pen in the 7,000 copies of the first edition, and the sale of the yearbook suspended.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New delay in W. Sahara referendum

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — A referendum on whether Western Sahara should become independent or part of Morocco has been further delayed, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said in a report released Friday. Dr. Ghali had hoped to recommend to the Security Council that U.N. officials begin organising the referendum June 1. But his report to the council said new delays in voter registration mean the effort will be delayed until at least August, with the referendum to be held next January at the earliest. Morocco and independence-seeking Polisario rebels waged sporadic combat after Spain withdrew from the territory in 1976 but have observed a U.N.-monitored cease-fire since 1991. The phosphate-rich former Spanish Sahara is the last disputed former colonial territory in Africa. Disputes over who can vote in the referendum have dragged on for years. U.N. officials are drawing up a voter list for the referendum by interviewing 200,000 former nomads and residents of Morocco and Polisario refugee camps in neighbouring Algeria. A senior official in the peacekeeping force in Western Sahara, Frank Ruddy, told the U.S. Congress last January that Morocco was manipulating the voter registration's results and otherwise hampering the U.N. operation. The United Nations denied the charges.

Kurdish 'parliament-in-exile' to open in Belgium

BRUSSELS (AFP) — A Kurdish "parliament-in-exile" will open in a town in Belgium on April 12, Belgian Senator Willy Kuijpers said Friday. The assembly will be composed of around 20 mayors and six senior officials forces to take refuge in Belgium to escape the violence going on in Turkey, the senator said, refusing to name the town chosen to host the self-styled parliament. Remzi Kartal, a member of the pro-Kurdish commission preparing to set up the assembly, said the name of the town was being kept secret for security reasons. Turkish Parliamentary Speaker Husamettin Cindoruk on March 17 cancelled a visit to Belgium due for March 21 in protest at the proposal to set up a "parliament-in-exile" for Turkish Kurds who have been fighting Ankara for over 10 years to establish an autonomous homeland.

Iran says kidnapped Chinese freed

TEHRAN (R) — Iran said on Friday a Chinese engineer abducted nine months ago in the southern Iranian province of Hormuzgan has been freed. "One of the Chinese engineers that was helping us there, was kidnapped by bandits... (and) held captive several months. We took him back a few days ago," President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said in remarks broadcast on Tehran Radio. Fua Yeshin was kidnapped along with his driver and another Iranian in June while working at a mineral factory, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported at the time. Mr. Rafsanjani did not give details about the fate of the kidnapped Iranians. The remote region between Bandar Abbas and Kishnuj where the three were kidnapped has a reputation as a lawless region frequented by armed smugglers and drug traffickers. Iran said in November helicopter-borne Revolutionary Guard units killed about 25 bandits in the region.

S. Africa, Tunisia to promote relations

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — South Africa and Tunisia will establish a joint commission to promote bilateral relations during a state visit next week by Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali, a presidential spokesman said. Parks Mankahlana, spokesman for President Nelson Mandela, said in a statement that Mr. Ben Ali, current chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), will arrive Tuesday for a three-day visit at the invitation of Mr. Mandela. The two leaders are to discuss various bilateral issues, including OAU matters, Mr. Mankahlana said. The Tunisian leader will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia and Trade Minister Slaheddine M'barek, he added.

DR. NABIL ASFOUR DENTIST PROSTHODONTIST

Would like to announce that he is moving to his new clinic at Bader Medical Centre, Fifth Circle - near the Arab Heart Centre, behind the Mill Bakery, and will receive his patients as usual from Saturday 1st April 1995.

Tel. (863250)